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CASTELVETRO'S THEORY OF POETRY

BY

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To

Professor C. E. Vaughan

In the hope that he will pardon the insufficiencies
of this unworthy tribute

PREFACE

THE subject of this little book was suggested by Professor Vaughan as the outcome of his course of lectures in the University of Leeds on the History of Criticism; and the award of a Fellowship by the Senate of the same University enabled me to carry out the suggestion.

There are perhaps many reasons to justify a choice of Castelvetro for such exposition as is here attempted, and among them is the fact that his *Poetica d'Aristotele* is very difficult to get hold of; for though a German scholar, Richard Otto,[1] mentions casually four reprints (1582, 1678, 1827, 1831—the last in Milan) since the second edition (1576), I cannot trace any of them. Moreover, Castelvetro has not been expounded in full; beyond Professor Fusco's book alluded to in the text, and in addition, a brief treatment by Cavazzuti[2] to which Professor Vaughan has drawn my attention, but which I have not yet seen, there seems to be no book which deals with him fully and individually. In the belief that Castelvetro is worthy of study, and in the knowledge that treatment in extract such as is the

1. Mairet's *Silvanire*, ed. Rd. Otto, Bamberg, 1890.
2. Cavazzuti, *Lodovico Castelvetro*, Modena, 1903.

following, cannot be ultimately satisfying, I am at present preparing for publication a complete edition of the *Poetica*, with a full critical apparatus.

It remains for me to express my deepest thanks to Professor Brandl of Berlin, Professor Moorman of Leeds, Professor Saintsbury of Edinburgh, and to Professors Herford, Kastner, and Tout of Manchester, for valuable help and advice willingly given; to the Senate of the University of Leeds for providing opportunity for research and for permission to publish its result; and to Mr. H. M. McKechnie for his great patience and energy in all things incident to the progress from manuscript to book. But to Professor Vaughan I have an obligation greater than words can tell, and one, moreover, not limited to matters of Poetics. Yet even in that restricted field, his help has been of such extent that if there is anything of good in this book, it is his; for its shortcomings I alone am responsible.

H. B. Charlton.

The University,
Manchester,
30th September, 1913.

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Erratum.

Page 150, note 1, 4th line from end, insert after 'omnibus', "poeta qui admirandus in omnibus."

INTRODUCTION.

Life of Castelvetro (1505–1571).[1]

The life of Castelvetro extended over a period of time in which befell some of the most momentous events in the history of Europe. The 16th century is the age in which Humanism reaches its culmination; Erasmus died in 1536: it is the period in which Renaissance art bloomed its finest fables, the age which gave us Cervantes and Shakespeare. Moreover, it is the century in which the Reformation blazed in Europe, the time of Luther and Calvin, of Ignatius Loyola and Julius II, and of the Council of Trent. Further still, the century opens with the middle life of Machiavelli, its third, fourth, and fifth decades are occupied by the quarrels of Francis I of France and the Emperor Charles for the spoils of Italy. And so this Italy of Castelvetro, beautiful, rich and defenceless, was being whirled in the vortex of the literary, political and religious movements of the time: and Castelvetro, himself a humanist and a lover of letters above all things, with little interest in political life and in the world of affairs, was dragged into the whirlpool. It was his unhappy fate to be torn from the quiet of the humanist academies and to be driven by

1. The ensuing life of Castelvetro is drawn from one written by Lodovico Antonio Muratori, Librarian to the Duke of Modena, and published by him as a preface to his edition of Castelvetro's *Opere Varie Critiche* (Lyons, 1727).

the political and religious powers into a life of hardship and exile.

Lodovico Castelvetro was born in the year 1505, of a noble citizen family at Modena, thirty miles from Reggio, the birthplace of Ariosto: he was eleven years old when the *Orlando Furioso* was published, and when he died in 1571, Tasso was completing his long labours on the *Gerusalemme Liberata*. Castelvetro's parents, "sparing neither diligence nor expense," [1] encouraged his early love of learning, thus enabling him to follow courses of study in the Universities of Bologna, Ferrara, Padua, and Siena. At his father's wish, he studied law, but his predilections lay towards humanistic learning, and, in Siena especially, he had frequent opportunity for contact with like spirits to his own: for in that city, "then the second (in Italy) for noble and most ardent minds devoted to the sciences, and particularly to the cultivation of Philosophy, Erudition, and the more pleasing Letters," was the Accademia degl' Intronati. Attracted by such society, Castelvetro was disposed to extend his stay in Siena longer than was pleasing to his father, who had planned a diplomatic career for his son. So, in deference to his father, he took the doctorate of Law at Siena, and betook himself to Rome, where a maternal uncle was acting as ambassador to the Pope for Francesco Maria dalla Rovere, Duke of Urbino.

This uncle, Giovanni Maria dalla Porta, was

1. All the quotations in this chapter are from Muratori's life. See note supra p. 1.

a man of some influence. From the secretaryship to Alfonso I, Duke of Ferrara, he passed by the consent of his master into the service of the Duke of Urbino, who had need of a capable man to undertake an embassy to Rome; and later, as a reward for the success of this undertaking, he was made Count Hereditary. With such influence behind him, Castelvetro could hope for "illustrious advancements of fortune in that Queen of Courts": but the life of affairs in Rome at this time, just before or just after the sack of 1527, was repulsive to him, and he soon left clandestinely to return to Siena, "where, following his strong inclination, he gave himself entirely to the study of polite Letters, Greek, Latin, and Italian." However, his family were displeased with his flight from Rome and from the hopes of temporal advancement, and so, to effect a reconciliation, he left Siena to return to his home at Modena. At this time, he suffered a severe attack of hæmorrhage, an illness, rendered more acute by incessant study, which clung to him for twelve years, and so weakened his constitution that he was obliged for the rest of his life to restrict himself to the plainest diet, "living solely on bread, herbs, fish and fruits, and drinking only water." Physical weakness, however, in no way interfered with his passion for learning; "he could not restrain himself from his studies, and especially from the study of the vulgar tongue."

In Modena, Castelvetro had an ally in Giovanni

Grilenzono, a man who seems to have been a typical humanist. From Castelvetro's memoir of him, we hear of his household, how he and his numerous brothers and their wives lived together in one house which served as a sort of private Academy; how in this house friends assembled to hear lectures on humanistic culture and readings of the classical poets; how banquets were held at which every guest had to compose a Greek or Latin epigram, or an Italian sonnet or madrigal, or had to speak only in that language laid down for the occasion by the president of the banquet (*Signor della Cena*), or had to recite ancient proverbs on chosen topics: we hear, too, that Grilenzono privately paid one Marco Antonio da Crotona to read Greek in Modena, and that later, through the agitation of Castelvetro and Grilenzono, "Francesco Porto, a Greek native of Candia, father of Emilio Porto, was called to read Greek publicly at Modena." In addition to this civic institution, both Castelvetro and Grilenzono "were accustomed to read and examine privately in their own house to a chosen assembly of students one of the old Greek or Latin authors." So gradually there assembled in Modena a host of humanists who not only studied the ancient but practised Italian poetry—Castelvetro, Grilenzono, Cardinal Jacopo Sadoleto, Cardinal Tomaso Badia, Gregorio Cortesi, Bishop Giovanni Morone, Francesco Maria Molza, Gandolfo Porrino, and Giovan Maria Barbieri. This encouragement of native poetry

is particularly noteworthy; Castelvetro, we are told, "delighted himself not a little with the old Provençal literature." Thus humanism flourished in Modena under the leadership of Castelvetro, "who was reputed another Socrates." He founded what was virtually though not statutably an Academy, "where Greek and Latin works of the old authors were examined and where disputations relating to the sciences took place, and where, above all, was practised in many forms the art of literary criticism."

At this point of time, 1541, began that series of conflicts with the political and religious powers which was to harass Castelvetro to the end of his life. The Academy of Modena was suspected of a tendency to the Protestant heresy. One of its members, Giovanni Poliziano, was excommunicated temporarily in 1541, and in 1542 orders were sent from Rome for the suppression of heretics in Modena. The citizens were amazed at the implied accusation, and, with Castelvetro amongst their number, signed a declaration of their firm Catholic faith. This satisfied the Church for a time. But in 1545 there was a fresh outbreak. One of the members of the Academy, a certain Pellegrino degli Erri, had taken umbrage at a joke which had been played on him; and in revenge he accused his fellow members of heresy. As a result, the Pope caused Filippo Valentino, one of the best known members of the Academy, to be arrested. As yet, however, Castelvetro does not seem to have

suffered individually. On the contrary, he seems to have enjoyed a great reputation amongst his fellow citizens, for he was one of the twelve presidents of the commune (*conservatori*) in 1542 and again in 1551.

But in 1553 his troubles began: in that year he became involved in what at first was a minor literary dispute with Caro. Annibal Caro was secretary to the Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, and had written a canzone in praise of the Farnese and of the Royal House of France—*Venite all'ombra de' gran gigli d'oro*, a canzone destined to be discussed more than any other poem of its length in all literature. Some evilly disposed person asked Castelvetro incidentally what he thought of the poem, and then passed on his unfavourable criticism to the ears of the author. From that moment Caro persecuted Castelvetro systematically, at first by vilifying him, calling him "by the spiteful and indecent names of Pedantuccio and Grammatuccio," and issuing against him a volley of pamphlets, always procuring, however, that none of his pamphlets got to Castelvetro himself, and so preventing a definite reply to a definite charge. But in 1558, the Accademia di Bianchi published an apology for Caro against Castelvetro, and the latter at once set to work on an answer. So we get the pamphleteering warfare between Castelvetro on the one hand, and Caro and his supporter Benedetto Varchi on the other.

But in the meantime Caro tired of a merely

verbal conflict. He sought to use the vast punitive machinery of the Church against his opponent by accusing him to the Sacred Inquisition of Rome. He was aided in this scheme by one of Castelvetro's brothers, who was estranged from the rest of the family by a domestic quarrel, and who agreed to denounce his brother as a heretic. So Castelvetro was summoned to Rome. But aware of his opponent's influence with Pope Paul IV, and himself weakened in body, he took refuge in hiding in the Duke of Ferrara's states, until Pius V came to the papal throne. Then, in 1560, Castelvetro went to Rome to refute the accusation. Unfortunately, his examiner, one Tomaso da Vigevana, was hostile to him from the beginning, and threatened him with heavy torture.[1] So Castelvetro fled in fright. His flight served for an assumption of guilt and he was at once excommunicated. The remaining ten years of his life were to be spent in exile.

After finding temporary refuge in Ferrara, he retreated to Chiavenna, a town on the borders of Switzerland and Italy, in the neighbourhood of Lake Como and of Trent where the great Church Council was being held. Here he remained more than two years, making repeated efforts to have his case heard before the Council: but when all these failed, he betook himself to Lyons, which he made temporarily his home, arriving

1. Bayle in his *Dictionary* (2nd edition, London, 1735) says that Castelvetro fled because he was confronted with a work of Melancthon's which he had translated.

there in 1563 or 1564 and staying there, as we know from a letter he wrote, at least as late as 1567.

But even in Lyons troubles fell thick on him. The town was torn by the disputes of the Huguenots and the Catholics, and in the course of one of the frequent tumults, Castelvetro's house was sacked. Again he sought refuge in flight, and again misfortune dogged his steps, for as he was escaping from the town, he was attacked by armed ruffians and only got clear with his life after great difficulty. In this destruction of his house, many of his books and manuscripts were lost: amongst the latter "were a Vulgar Grammar composed by him in full detail, a Comment made by him on the greater part of the dialogues of Plato, a Critique on the comedies of Plautus and Terence, some Remarks on the Comedy of Dante, and a Translation of the New Testament." Of these there remain only fragments, which have been collected and published in the *Opere Varie Critiche* (1727). Fortunately the manuscript of Castelvetro's *La Poetica d'Aristotele* was preserved, as a copy of it had been sent to Modena some time before.

From Lyons Castelvetro passed in his exile to Geneva and thence to Chiavenna, where he spent one more year. At that time, one of his brothers, who had fled with him, had received protection in Vienna, and thither Castelvetro went to join him. Here he was well received by the Emperor Maximilian and was given opportunity to publish

his *Poetica d'Aristotele*, which thus appeared first in 1570, dedicated to its author's new protector, Maximilian. Soon, however, misfortunes returned. Vienna was plague-smitten, and Castelvetro had to return to Chiavenna, where he proposed to winter before proceeding to Basle. But death forestalled him on the 21st of February 1571. "So in the sixty-sixth year of his age, Lodovico Castelvetro ceased to live, and wrote finished to the Iliad of his disasters, a humanist of the acutest mind and of rare knowledge, Philosopher and Critic of great reputation, one whose life was spent in rough times, worthy though he assuredly was of better fortunes."

CHAPTER I.

Renaissance Criticism.

The object of the following study is primarily to formulate Castelvetro's theory of poetry, and to set it side by side with the more salient features of that of his immediate contemporaries; but a brief attempt has been made to regard its main points critically in their relationship to the general development of æsthetic and literary theory. No attempt can be made here to give a history of literary criticism in Italy up to the time of Castelvetro; for that the reader is referred to the truly stupendous accumulation of material in Prof. Saintsbury's *History of Criticism*,[1] and to a shorter work, written from a different point of view, Prof. Spingarn's *Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*.[2] It would appear advisable, however, to give some short résumé of the tendencies of criticism current in Italy in the 16th century.

The first problem of all literary criticism is necessarily a linguistic one. This was Dante's problem in the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (1304); and he really carried it through two stages—he rejected Latin in favour of Italian, and further,

1. *A History of Criticism*, G. Saintsbury, 3 vols. Edinburgh 1900—1904.

2. *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, J. E. Spingarn, 2nd Ed., New York, 1908.

he offered proposals for a choice of standard Italian from the many dialectal varieties. But Dante's *De Vulgari Eloquentia* does not seem to have been known until Trissino issued it anonymously in 1529: and by that time the first stage of the problem at least, had been decided independently through the critical activities of Alberti, Lorenzo de' Medici, Poliziano, and supremely, of Cardinal Bembo.[1] After the publication of Bembo's *Prose* in 1525, Latin ceased to be considered as the language of a future Italian literature; and at the same time, the poetic achievements of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio in the past, the contemporary activities of Ariosto, and the later ones of Tasso all tended to fix a standard native language for Italian poetry.

But with Bembo's *Prose*, the way was now cleared for forms of criticism more definitely literary than are the linguistic questions which it answered: and so we come at once to Vida's *Ars Poetica* (1527)[2]. The predominant influence in Vida is that of Horace; with him, Horace becomes the dictator of the early Renaissance critics, such as Dolce[3] and Daniello.[4] For half a century, at least, Horace exerts a very powerful influence, either entirely in his own name, as

1. Vide *Les Sources italiennes de la "Deffense et Illustration de la langue françoise."* Pierre Villey, Paris 1908.
2. *Selecta Poemata Italorum, qui Latine Scripserunt.* A. Pope, 2 vols., London, 1740.
3. Dolce's Translation of Horace's *Ars Poetica*, 1535, and *Osservationi*, Vinegia, 1560.
4. Daniello, *La Poetica*, Vinegia, 1536.

with Vida, or as an expositor or fellow of Aristotle, as with Minturno,[1] and to a slightly less extent with Scaliger.[2] Only when we come to Castelvetro[3] is Horace dethroned, and indeed almost despised.

But Horace did not occupy a sole dictatorship for long. With the re-discovery of the *περὶ ποιητικῆς*, Aristotle appeared as a leader of Italian criticism.[4] In 1536 Alessandro de Pazzi published a Latin and Greek version of the Poetics, a reprint of the Aldine Greek text of 1508; in 1548 Robertelli issued the Greek text, a Latin translation and a long commentary;[5] and in 1549 Bernardo Segni published the first Italian version.[6] Criticism now took a great step forward. Horace had offered no æsthetic theory: he did not even offer a theory of poetry. His *Ars Poetica* is much more a practical art, a science of practical poetics. Aristotle's range is much wider; if, in the Poetics, he does not offer a full system of æsthetics, he does propound a theory

1. Minturno, *De Poeta Libri Sex*, Venetiis, 1559, and *L'Arte Poetica*, Venetia, 1564. [The references to the *Arte Poetica* in the following pages are to the Naples edition of 1725.]

2. J. C. Scaliger, *Poetices Libri Septem*, 1561. [The references in the following pages are to the 5th edition, published in 1617.]

3. Castelvetro, *La Poetica d'Aristotele, vulgarizzata et sposta*, Vienna, 1570. [The references in the following pages are to the second (augmented) edition, Basilea, 1576.] And *Opere Varie Critiche*, Lione, 1727.

4. Spingarn, *op. cit.*, p. 16 ff.

5. Robertelli, *In Librum Aristotelis de Arte Poetica Explicationes*, Florentiæ, 1548.

6. Segni, *Rettorica et Poetica d'Aristotele tradotte in lingua vulgare Fiorentina*, Vinegia, 1551.

of poetry, and so further broadens the problems of criticism. The influence of Aristotle dominates the greater part of Italian criticism in the latter half of the 16th century, producing its finest results in the works of Castelvetro; with the other contemporary critics, as, for instance, with Minturno and with Scaliger, Aristotle is too often interpreted from the point of view of Horace.

But Aristotelianism and pseudo-Aristotelianism do not make up the full account of Italian criticism in the Renaissance; Platonism is also to be reckoned with. It is probably true that Aristotle offers a more complete and more satisfying theory of æsthetics than does Plato: it is nevertheless true that, for many reasons, to the critics of the Renaissance, Aristotle counted more as a theorist of poetry only, than as a theorist of æsthetics in general; and further still, he counted more as an authority on poetic devices, on the construction of poetry, than as a philosopher of the theory of poetry. But Plato, for good and evil, could only be reckoned as a philosopher: and so his introduction into Renaissance criticism of necessity widened its range still further to an inclusion of most problems of a theory of art. It is worthy of notice that the Platonic philosophy had been developed a considerable time by Renaissance scholars before it was definitely incorporated into literary criticism. Thus, although Platonism became a great force in thought through the labours of Marsilio Ficino (1433—1499), it did not become a definite component of the criticism

of poetry until the time of Fracastoro's dialogue *Naugerius* (1555)[1]; but with Torquato Tasso,[2] it had become a dominant element. In many ways Tasso is very typical of 16th century criticism; in his critical dialogues, Horatian, Aristotelian, and Platonic trends of thought are present, not indeed reconciled, but there, even if in discord.

Such then, was literary criticism in Italy at the time of Castelvetro. The material for the following study of his theory of poetry is to be found in his Commentary on Aristotle's Poetics—*La Poetica d'Aristotele, vulgarizzata et sposta*—of which the first edition appeared at Vienna in 1570, and the second, which has been our authority throughout, at Basle in 1576, and in his *Opere Varie Critiche*, published at Lyons in 1727. Fracastoro's *Naugerius* is dated 1555. Minturno published his *De Poeta* in 1559, and his *Arte Poetica*[3] five years later (1564). In the meantime, Scaliger's *Poetices Libri Septem* had appeared in 1561, and in 1587 Torquato Tasso's *Discorsi dell' Arte Poetica*[4] were first printed,

1. Fracastoro, G., *Opera.* 2 vols. Genevæ, 1621.

2. Tasso, T., *Opere, per cura di G. Rossini.* 33 vols. Pisa, 1821—1832.

3. Minturno's *Arte Poetica* is a curtailed version of his *De Poeta*, done into Italian by request. Practically the whole doctrine of the *Arte Poetica* is to be found in the *De Poeta.* In the dedication to the Italian work, he alludes to its Latin original, "ne' quali consumai presso a 20 anni, e tutto il migliore degli anni miei."

4. In view of the obscurity of our information regarding the publication of Tasso's *Discorsi*, especially as affecting Sidney's indebtedness to them, the following notes by one of their later editors, Signor Cesare Guasti, may be given here. Alluding to the *Discorsi dell' Arte Poetica, ed in particolare sopra il Poema Eroico* he writes :—"The Torquato

though presumably they had been written about 1564: they were followed in 1594 by his *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*. It is hoped that the following pages will show how Castelvetro stands to the critical tendencies of the time, and in particular, how his theory compares with those of Minturno and Scaliger on the one hand, and with those of Fracastoro and Tasso on the other.

Bearing in mind the facts that Castelvetro's chief work is a commentary on the *Poetics*, and that it follows this closely in order and in subject, we may anticipate some of the more general qualities of his doctrine. Like Aristotle, he has no complete theory of art: he has no theory of the beautiful. The word 'bellezza' occurs but once or twice throughout the *Poetica*; and from one or two allusions, it is evident that Castelvetro holds to the formal beauty of the early Greek philosophers; indeed, he specifically defines the beautiful as "restricted within the limits of proportionate lines, measures, and colours."[1]

componesse questi tre Discorsi a vent' anni e precisamente nel 1564 . . . . . lo crede il Serassi: ma anno più, anno meno, l'Autore medesimo li chiamò lavoro dell' eta giovanile, anzi della sua fanciullezza." Of the *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, the same authority says: "Non corresse soltanto l'Autore i discorsi dell' Arte Poetica, ma di tre ch'erano, gli accrebbe fino a sei: e desiderò che fossero stampati in Napoli dallo Stigliola nel 1594 . . . . . Ma fu, al solito, pessimamente servito dallo stampatore." Apparently, however, these revised and augmented discourses were printed in 1594, but in a bad state. Sidney may have seen the first version of them (1564). To us, however, it seems that the *Apology* is much more indebted to Minturno than to Tasso. It looks, indeed, as if the *Apology* was written with Minturno's *De Poeta* lying open on Sidney's writing table.

1. *Poetica d'Aristotele*, p. 342, ristretta dentro da termini di lineamenti, di misure, e di colori temperati.

Still, by virtue of greater length alone, Castelvetro is more explicit than is Aristotle. He has interesting references to the other fine arts, many to painting, one or two to sculpture and architecture. It is doubtful, however, if Castelvetro's conception of painting would justify its inclusion amongst the fine arts. He has no idea of its artistic function; to him, its end is in photographic reproduction — "nell' evidentemente rassomigliare," [1] "in making similar to the true, the living, and the natural." [2] At most, the artist may imitate beauty if his model is a beautiful woman; but the formal conception of beauty, mentioned above, modifies this to futility.

Further, Castelvetro's treatise runs to a great length; in arrangement, his method lends itself to prolixity, and in content, his wide survey of literature includes references to Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Italian letters, epic and drama, prose and verse, with a special penchant for Boccaccio, for most of which riches he has an admiration, never, like Vida, an idolatry. Yet despite this width of outlook and length of treatment, it remains true that Castelvetro's most apparent and keenest interest is in the drama, or rather, in tragedy. But perhaps this study will show that his main contribution to poetic theory, is not to that of tragedy, nor indeed to that of drama, but to the inclusive idea of poetry as a fine art. Like Aristotle, he deals with comedy, but only in so

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 611.
2. *Ibid*, p. 41, in farla simile al vero, et al vivo, et al naturale.

far as a dramatic theorist cannot entirely neglect this species. Like Aristotle, he treats of the epic, but only sporadically; that is, if a sporadic and incidental treatment is possible to a 16th century commentator. Like Aristotle, he neglects the theory of lyric poetry almost entirely: in the *Opere Varie Critiche*, the canzoni of Petrarch and Dante are brought under notice, but only to the extent of explanatory and textual annotations. Like that of the Aristotle's *Poetics*, his main theme is a consideration of tragedy. And even here, a further limitation may be made. Castelvetro's interest is not primarily philosophical and in the idea of drama. It is more practically dramaturgic, with a view to the repertoire of the future stage. Yet Castelvetro had a keen speculative insight, he was "the most subtle of all the Commentators," says Rapin, and so, avowedly practical and particular as he is, he is always guided by a philosophic conception of the idea of drama, or of the idea of poetry. If he has no clear vision of these ideas as themselves components of and subordinate to the supreme idea of art, it is because his genius was not so universal as Aristotle's. And that is no damnatory admission.

CHAPTER II.

The Poet and the Art of Poetry.

With Tasso's definition of nature—"Nature is the art of God"[1]—Castelvetro would have accepted the Aristotelian principle that art imitates nature. "Art is not a thing different from nature, nor can it pass beyond the limits of nature; it sets out with the same purpose as that of nature"[2]: that is, to Castelvetro, to Tasso, and to Aristotle, art imitates nature as a creative energy. Castelvetro expressly asserts that the highest art is not an imitation of the beautiful; for in that case, beauty, according to the accepted theory, being purely formal, art would be mere copying; it would be "restricted within the limits of proportionate lines, measures, and colours."[3] But fine art, like nature, is essentially creative: the stamp of the artist is his originality, his genius for invention, "ingegno a trovare,"[4] by virtue of which he vies with nature.

This brings us at once to the poet, and to the art of poetry. The doctrine of Plato's *Ion* that

1. Tasso, *Opere*, vol. vii, *Ficino, o dell' Arte*, p. 246. La Natura è l'arte di Dio.
2. *P. d' A.*, p. 69. L'arte non è cosa diversa dalla natura, nè può passare oltre i confini della natura, e intende di fare quello stesso, che fa la natura.
3. *Supra*, p. 15, note 1.
4. *P. d' A.*, p. 67.

the poet is divinely inspired, found frequent echo amongst Renaissance critics. It served to give the sanctity of religion to the pagan poets; and Minturno, Bishop of the Roman Church, winds a long, if somewhat hollow, blast on the theme of divine inspiration: he speaks of the poet's "being agitated by the divine spirit," [1] of "those sacred springs from which the poets drink," [2] and of "the poets, stirred as by divine inhalation, flying like bees agitated by the impulse of the gods, to gather all things beautiful." [3] Even the most un-Platonic Scaliger takes up the strain: "for this therefore poets invoke the Muses, that filled with fury they may accomplish their task." [4] But with both Scaliger and Minturno, Bacchus may supplant the Muses, and inspiration be engendered by the fumes of unmixed wine—"exhalatio meri." [5] On the other hand, Castelvetro will have none of this theory, "which some attribute to Plato, namely, that poetry is infused in men by divine fury. This opinion has had its birth in the ignorance of the mob, and has been fostered and favoured by the vainglory of

1. Minturno, *De Poeta*, p. 18. Divino spiritu agitante.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 67. Fontes quosdam sacros, ex quibus hauriant poetae.

3. *Ibid*, p. 67. Non secus ac si divino haustu excitentur, et veluti apes volitent Deorum impulsu agitati, ut pulcherrima quaeque decerpant.

4. J. C. Scaliger, *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 10. Idcirco igitur invocant Poetae Musas ut furore imbuti peragant quod opus est.

5. *Ibid*, p. 10.

poets."[1] He believes that the theory was never propounded seriously. "When Plato mentions it in his books, he is undoubtedly joking, as is his custom to do with similar things, as for instance, in the Phædrus."[2] Further, Castelvetro thinks he has Aristotle with him, though this necessitates an alteration in the text, Castelvetro reading the Poetics, xvii. 2. *διὸ εὐφυοῦς ἡ ποιητικὴ ἐστιν οὐ μανικοῦ*,[3] and translating, "the poetic therefore is the product of a person endowed by a good nature, and not by a mad one,"[4] where Butcher reads *διὸ εὐφυοῦς ἡ ποιητικὴ ἐστιν ἢ μανικοῦ* and translates, "hence poetry implies either a happy gift of nature or a strain of madness."[5] In effect, it is the old dispute, Nature or Art?—though Castelvetro holds that Horace's formulation of the argument is false, since art and nature are not contrary, but in this respect identical. Tasso's position is similar: art and nature are

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 65. Quella opinione, che alcuni attribuiscono a Platone, che la poesia sia infusa negli huomini per furore divino. La quale opinione ha havuto origine e nascimento dall' ignoranza del vulgo, et è stata accresciuta e favorata dalla vanagloria de' poeti.

2. *Ibid*, p. 66. Attorto adunque è attribuita questa opinione del furore infuso da dio ne' poeti a Platone, la quale, come dico, hebbe origine dal vulgo, acconsentendovi essi poeti per suo interesse. E Platone, quando ne fa mentione ne' suoi libri, senza fallo scherza, secondo che in simili cose per lo più è suo costume di fare, si come nel Phedro, ... e si come molto apertamente si vede nel Gione.

3. *Ibid*, p. 374. Castelvetro has the same reading as Butcher's, but he condemns it and substitutes the one given above.

4. *Ibid*, p. 366. Per la qual cosa la poetica è da persona fornita di buona natura e non da furiosa.

5. Butcher, S. H. *The Poetics of Aristotle, edited with critical notes and a translation.* 4th ed., 1907, pp. 62, 63.

seeking the same results, but art is the surer way, "more noble, more certain and more reliable than the other, yet more difficult and indeed a labour of doctrine and genius, though of genius much more." [1] The poet, says Castelvetro, may be, like Homer, "either taught by conscious art, or guided by the felicity of natural disposition," [2] but in either case, he is no artist if (as Shelley's translation of the *Ion* has it) he writes "not through knowledge, but by inspiration, ignorant the while of the wisdom and beauty he displays," or if (in Castelvetro's way of expressing the same process) he writes "guided by chance or by accident." [2] Art is not the poet's dream, but his task. The poet, as artist, must always work consciously, must "sapere il perchè." [3] Hence the importance of the study of the Art of Poetry: not, however, with Castelvetro as with Scaliger, that all men may become poets; but that all poets must be studied in the art.

The prevalence of this view accounts for the number, purpose, and form of the multitude of *Arti Poetiche* which were poured forth in the 16th century. They were to be the school-books of the poet, his poetic encyclopædia and his literary vade-mecum, Helicon in tabloids. Scaliger pompously announces: "We under-

1. *Opere*, xi. *Lezione di T. Tasso nell' accademia ferrarese*, p. 43. Più nobile, più certo, e più sicuro dell' altro, è nondimeno più difficile, e opera di dottrina e d'ingegno, e d'ingegno molto maggiore.
2. *P. d' A.*, p. 511. O ammaestrato da arte apparata o guidato da bontà di natura, e non dalla ventura o dal caso.
3. *Ibid*, p. 67.

take to create a poet." [1] Minturno embellishes the title-page of his *Arte Poetica* with the programme; "containing precepts for Heroic, Tragic, Comic, Satiric and all other kinds of Poetry, with the doctrine of Sonnets, Canzoni and all sorts of Tuscan rimes, where is taught the manner Petrarch uses in his works, and where is discussed all which has been written by Aristotle, Horace, and other Greek and Latin authors for the instruction of poets." [2] Obviously then, criticism is mere prescription-writing; its object is legislative and executive at once, judicial hardly at all. Its primary aim is not to appreciate the work of the past, but to prescribe for the future, not to loose, but to bind. Castelvetro holds this heresy, laying, however, somewhat greater stress on the judicial and appreciative function of criticism. Aristotle's *Poetics*, he says, is a great help both to estimation and to composition, "to compose fittingly, and to judge compositions directly." [3] But criticism, that is (in the terminology of Renaissance theorists) the art of poetry, ought to "teach well and directly to compose poems": [4] and Castelvetro defines the

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 181. Poetam creare instituimus.

2. *L'Arte Poetica* del Signor Antonio Minturno, nella quale si contengono i precetti Eroici, Tragici, Comici, Satirici, e d'ogni altra Poesia: con la dottrina de' Sonetti, Canzoni, ed ogni sorte di Rime Toscane, dove s'insegna il modo, che tenne il Petrarca nelle sue opere, e si dichiara a'suoi luoghi tutto quel, che da Aristotele, Orazio, ed altri Autori Greci e Latini è stato scritto per ammaestramento de' Poeti.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 4. A comporre convenevolmente, o a giudicare dirittamente i poemi composti.

4. *Ibid.* p. 6. Insegnare bene e dirittamente a comporre poemi.

Art of Poetry as "a collection of all the necessary doctrines ordained with fitting arrangement to teach the making of a praiseworthy poem."[1] It must be a complete practical treatise. "If the doctrines of the art are good and complete, they will be able to teach us what we ought to do in every part of poetry."[2] Such an art of poetry, "following the thread of which poets cannot err,"[3] Castelvetro endeavoured to formulate in his commentary on Aristotle.

This conception of the function of the critic is, of course, extremely dangerous, because it is false; and that such an initial error did not utterly nullify the value of Castelvetro's theory is due alone to the general soundness of its other principles. A prescriptive art of poetry is necessarily dogmatic, and must assume the authority of finality. Two courses are open: either the critic may attempt a speculative theory, with reason as his authority; or he may accept certain works as the standard of excellence, and establish them as a final and exclusive criterion. The danger of the first course is less in proportion to the degree of speculative insight; yet it is apt to get away from experience and become a hypothetical, yet compulsory abstraction: an example is the theory

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 7. Io intendo per arte, come ho detto, il raccoglimento di tutti i necessari insegnamenti con bella dispositione ordinati per insegnare a fare un lodevole poema.
2. *Ibid*, p. 374. Se gli'nsegnamenti dell' arte sono buoni e compiuti, sono anchora atti ad insegnarci quello che dobbiamo fare in ciascuna parte della poesia.
3. *Ibid*, p. 394. . . . . il filo della quale seguendo, essi non possano errare.

of verisimilitude as applied by Castelvetro to support the dramatic unities. The danger of the second course is inevitable, since its basis is false: the result, even in the best cases, is unconditional imitation of the ancients, as with Vida and Minturno; at worst, it becomes individual idolatry, and the consequent rejection of nonconformity as heresy: an example is Scaliger's deification of Vergil. "Thus nothing was omitted by the celestial poet: nothing is to be added, unless by ignorant fools, nothing to be changed, unless by impudent rascals"[1]: to poets, the example, the rule, the beginning and the end, ought to be Vergil.[2] Minturno is more tolerant, but the radical heresy is there: "there are a few amongst the Latins and the Greeks, and amongst us, there is one only man, Petrarch, to make ourselves like whom, it behoves us to spend every labour and every study."[3]

Of the two classes of danger mentioned above, Castelvetro did not avoid the first: but he had many critical qualities in his favour—a wide survey as a basis for his speculation, and above all, a conviction which refused to allow *a priori* reason to oust experience; "experience is a

1. *Poeticæ Libri Septem*, p. 541. Ita nihil omissum cœlesti viro illi: nihil addendum, nisi ab ineptis, nihil immutandum nisi ab impudenti.

2. *Ibid*, p. 570. Verum satis haec putavimus esse ad imitantium utililatem, cujus exemplum, regula, principium, finis esse debet nobis Maro.

3. *Arte Poetica*, p. 445. . . . . tra' Latini, come tra' Greci sien pochi, e tra noi un sol Petrarca si trovi, a cui di farci simili ogni opera ed ogni studio por debbiamo.

greater demonstration than is reason." [1] And certainly Castelvetro never succumbed to the second of these dangers, for he never adopted the system on which it attends. Vergil is not to him the alpha and the omega of poetry; indeed in the *Opere Varie Critiche*, with irreverent glee, he formulates twenty-eight (mostly pedantic) objections to the Æneid; and he is incessant in attacking the Imitation of the Ancients. Mere imitation cannot produce poetry, "the essence of which is invention; no invention, no poet." [2] For their frequent imitation of the Greeks, Castelvetro would call most of the Latin poets "merely versifiers and translators": [3] and the whole process he stigmatises as the "infamy of theft," "wicked," and "vile," "infamia di furto," [4] "o ladro o vile." [5]

Finally, the assumption by the critic of the Scaligerian function of 'creating poets', particularly when it is found, as it usually is, with Maronolatry, is almost bound to result in the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 290. Discussing a point he cannot reconcile with theory, Castelvetro here writes:—Adunque poi che la sperienza mostra questo, la quale è la maggiore dimostratione che si può fare nell' arte, et alla quale nell' arti solamente ci dobbiamo attenere, non ne dobbiamo punto dubitare, anchora che la ragione ci tirasse a credere altramente.

2. *Ibid*, p. 216. . . . la cui essentia consiste nella'nventione, e senza essa inventione non è poeta.

3. *Ibid*, p. 146. . . . Plauto, Terentio, e molti latini, che presero le favole e le sententie dagli scrittori greci, nella compositione delle quali non durarono fatica niuna, e le vestirono di favella latina, non essendo essi atti a far favola o sententia che stesse bene, ma essendo solamente versificatori o traslatori, non ostante che senza niun loro merito s'usurpino il titola di poeta.

4. *Ibid*, p. 215. 5. *Ibid*, p. 67.

formation of a kind of poetical stockroom of metaphors and figures, regulation poetic devices and tricks for the production to order of epic, tragedy, sonnet, or epigram. Scaliger and Minturno and Tasso are full of them; but Castelvetro rejects them with scant ceremony. He will have no prologues in comedy,[1] no abstruse and scientific metaphors,[2] no involution of order of narration at the bidding of a verse of Horace,[3] no Messenger in drama where avoidable,[4] no eccentricities of grammar resting on precedent alone for justification,[5] and no false apotheosis of the ideal merely to hide the unreal.

Still, Castelvetro's avowed aim was to prescribe practical rules for the writing of dramas. Hence his view is not primarily æsthetic: he never loses sight of the artist in the art; and this is almost bound to have evil results. Inspiration denied, the poet is but a man as other men. His office is full of difficulties. "The material and the words, the fable and the verse of poetry are invented and imagined by the genius of the poet"[6]: originality and invention are the functions by which he can be judged a poet[7]: his office, then, is truly difficult. But Castelvetro goes further; the difficulty overcome is the right

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 24. 2. *Ibid*, p. 30. 3. *Ibid*, p. 157. 4. *Ibid*, p. 255. 5. *Ibid*, p. 407.

6. *Ibid*, p. 28. Poesia ha sua materia trovata et imaginata dallo'ngegno del poeta, et ha le parole non tali quali s'usano ragionando, perciocchè non s'usa tra gli huomini di ragionare in versi, ma le ha composte in misurati versi per l'opera dello'ngegno del poeta.

7. *Ibid*, p. 38. . . . . l'ufficio suo, per lo quale possa giudicato poeta.

describing note to know a poet by; no difficulty overcome, no poet; 'artistic' tends to become 'artificial.' It is significant that the Italian word for 'artistic' is '*artificiale*': its connotation must have included something midway between 'artistic' and 'artificial'; so, Castelvetro's definition—"the artistic (cosa artificiale) is that in the invention of which the artist suffers labour and exercises his genius greatly; and the inartistic (cosa disartificiale), that in the invention of which he does not employ much subtlety of genius, as the inartistic of itself is capable of being seen by any ordinary wit." [1] Faciles descensus Averni: the appreciation of art is a recognition of the difficulties overcome; a picture holds its spectator by its apparent artifice,[2] and so art becomes great in proportion to the difficulties it offers the artist. Minturno definitely formulates this proposition, giving it proverbial authority, though the difficulty overcome is no part of his theory:[3] and in a note to Aristotle's remark, "a further proof is, that novices in the art attain to finish of diction and precision of portraiture before they can construct the plot," [4] Castelvetro writes: "This is the fifth and last argument by which

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 350. Cose artificiali sono quelle nel trovamento delle quali egli dura fatica et essercita molto lo'ngegno, e disartificiali, quelle nel trovamento delle quali egli non adopera molta sottilita d'ingegno, essendo esse atte ad essere vedute da qualunque persona commune.

2. *Ibid*, p. 586. . . . . i buoni dipintori ritengono il veditore con l'artificio apparente.

3. *De Poeta*, p. 16. Nam praeclarissima quae sunt, ea maximam, ut in proverbio est, afferunt partem difficultatis.

4. Butcher, *Poetics*, vi, 14.

Aristotle proves the superiority of the plot over the other parts of tragedy, namely, the greater difficulty presented to the poet in its composition." [1]

Throughout, Castelvetro lays great stress on this theory of the difficulty overcome. He urges it to proscribe history, even versified, as the subject of poetry; "for as versifier only, the author endures no labour in invention." [2] He adduces it, with the above, to prove that poetry, not being history, is yet "a more philosophic and a higher thing than history," [3] translating this passage of the *Poetics* significantly "poetry is the work of a more philosophic mind, more practised in studies, than is history." [4] It is, further, the only device by which he can favour the strict observance of the unity of action in preference to a more inclusive one. And finally, it serves as a firm stronghold from which to repel the Imitation of the Ancients, since, if he 'steals' his poem, "the poet employs no labour in inventing it." [5]

Later critics took up the strain of the difficulty overcome. It was particularly acceptable in

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 143. Questo è il quinto e ultimo argomento per lo quale Aristotele pruova la maggioranza della favola sopra le altri parti della tragedia, preso dalla difficultà maggiore, che si dura in comporre lei bene, che non si dura in far le altri parti bene.

2. *Ibid*, p. 77. Perchè il versificatore nella'nventione non dura fatica niuna.

3. Butcher, *Poetics*, ix, 3.

4. *P. d' A.*, p. 183. La poesia è più da philosophante e da essercitato negli studi, che non è l'historia.

5. *Ibid*, p. 211. Poi che un altro (poeta) prendendole, non dura fatica niuna in trovarla.

France, where Voltaire was its champion. He writes of the " chaînes, qui rendent l'art d'autant plus précieux qu'il est plus difficile " : and, as Lessing said, what Voltaire spoke, the rest of the world believed; "er spricht, man glaubt". The difficulty overcome became an essential part of the ' classical ' creed.

CHAPTER III.

Poetry.

"Poetry is imitation (rassomiglianza), and its general mode is imitation."[1] Further, poetry imitates human action—"una attione humana";[2] "la poesia è rassomiglianza di coloro che fanno":[3] and to Castelvetro, as to Aristotle, action is the principal thing. With the above definition, it is significant to compare Minturno's —"poetry is an imitation (imitazione) of various manners or types of men."[4] But by 'rassomiglianza' Castelvetro conveys a somewhat more specific idea than 'imitation': "poetry is a narration, according to verisimilitude, of human actions."[5] 'Rassomiglianza,' resemblance, imitation by verisimilitude; this is the test of poetry. Hence, all literary productions which 'resemble,' are poetry: epic, drama, lyric, fable, hymn, mime, dialogue, and novella—all these are forms of poetry, whether in verse or not. "Lucian in many of his dialogues, and Boccaccio in his

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 12. Poesia è rassomiglianza, e la sua maniera generale è rassomiglianza.
2. *Ibid*, p. 586.
3. *Ibid*, p. 35.
4. *Arte Poetica*, p. 2. Poesia è imitazione di varie maniere di persone, etc.
5. *P. d' A.*, p. 5. Poesia è narratione secondo la verisimilitudine d'attioni humane.

Decamerone and in his Philocopo, are poets."[1] Still, Castelvetro thinks that all poetry, being fiction, should be written in verse, "as verse is the strongest argument to show that its subject is imagined."[2] But he has better reasons than that. "Verse is not to be reckoned as of the essence of poetry."[3] Still verse is "a more fitting instrument for poetry,"[4] and prose for history: though "the difference of verse and prose is not essential."[5] "But verse adorns poetry, and prose adorns history like garments suited to their different subjects; and poetry ought not without blame to take prose, nor history verse, and indeed cannot do so, just as women ought not to use or cannot use the dress of men, nor men the dress of women."[5] The epic, Castelvetro dogmatically asserts, cannot be written in prose,[6] presumably because prose is

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 190.

2. *Ibid*, p. 23. Si come il verso è fermissimo argomento a darci ad intendere che il soggetto compreso in lui, è imaginato e non vero, così la prosa debba essere non meno fermo argomento a dimostrare che il soggetto a lei sottoposto sia verità e non cosa imaginata.

3. *Ibid*, p. 25. Non è da tener conto niuno del verso, quanto è all' essentia della poesia.

4. *Ibid*, p. 64. La poesia ha per soggetto il rassomigliare, e per istomento proprio il verso.

5. *Ibid*, p. 190. La prosa o il verso, non diversificando il soggetto, non sono la differentia essentiale. Ma quantunque il verso e la prosa non sieno la differentia essentiale tra la poesia e l'historia, accompagno e adornano nondimeno il verso la poesia, e la prosa l'historia, come vestimenta loro conveniente e habiti. Nè deono senza biasimo, o possono prendere l'historia il verso, e la poesia la prosa, non altramente che donne nè deono o possono usare gli habiti da huomini, o gli huomini gli habiti da donne.

6. *Ibid*, p. 20. . . . . non essendo nè potendo essere epopea se non in verso.

not fitting with epic dignity. And so also with tragedy.

In drama, indeed, verse is a convention, and to this extent, a departure from the 'verisimile'; but by its adaptability to dramatic conditions, it is such that by creating a certain naturalness, it loses the appearance of a convention, and becomes, in another sense, or rather, from another point of view, practically 'verisimile.' This particular argument is a perfect illustration of Castelvetro's method: the actual conditions of the stage are the beginning and the end of his theory. He does not say, "Here is life: how can it be imitated?" but, "Here is the stage: how can it best imitate life?" "In prose dialogues, two or three persons talking cannot raise their voices more than to be heard only by each other without appearing either deaf or mad by their bawling for all the spectators to hear: but this unnaturalness disappears in verse dialogues, as verse carries with it a raised tone naturally without suspicion of deafness or madness. So tragedy and comedy should be in verse." [1] Further, verse is more easily remembered than is prose.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 23. Nel ragionando in prosa, due o tre persone non possono alzare la voce più di quello, che sia di necessità per farsi udire l'uno l'altro, altrimente paranno o sordi o pazzi, se grideranno in modo che il popolo circostante gli possa udire. La quale sconvenevolezza cessa ne' ragionamenti fatti in verso, portando per forza con esso seco il verso lo' nalzamento della voce, senza che altri paia o sordo o pazzo. Laonde si può quindi giudicare anchora, quanto sieno da lodare coloro, che a nostri dì hanno composte tragedie e comedie in prosa.

It will be seen that like Aristotle, Castelvetro held that verse is not essential to poetry, but is its fitting garment, or in Minturno's phrase, "proprium munus Poetarum."[1] Scaliger differs from them; to him, verse is the essence of poetry, and poet means not 'maker of fictions' but 'maker of verses.'[2] He directly attacks Aristotle for refusing Empedocles the name of poet: if Herodotus had written in verse, he would have been a historical poet.[3] In short, "metre is the soul of poetry,"[4] and not imitation, "for not all imitators are poets."[5] But not so Castelvetro. The test of poetry is not the verse, but the imitation.

By imitation, Castelvetro does not mean mere copying. Unlike Aristotle, he differentiates specifically between the imitation which is a natural instinct and the imitation which is the poet's. "For that imitation natural to man, which is born in him from childhood, by which he learns what he first learns, to which every man is more disposed than are other animals, and by the employment of which he is consequently delighted, that imitation is no other than follow-

1. *De Poeta*, p. 12.

2. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 6. Poetae igitur nomen non a fingendo quia fictis uteretur, sed initio a faciendo versu dictum est.

3. *Ibid*, p. 831. Nam quod poetae nomine defraudat Empedoclem, minus recte facit. . . . . Tum si quis Herodoti suavitates pedibus fecerit numerosas, efficiet is historicum poetam.

4. *Ibid*, p. 424. Numerus est anima poeseos.

5. *Ibid*, p. 831. Quam ob rem ita concludendum est, non ab imitatione, non enim omne poema imitatio: non, qui imitatur, omnis est poeta.

ing the example of others, and doing exactly the same thing as others do, without knowing its wherefore. But the imitation necessary to poetry not only neither follows the example given by others, nor makes the same thing as has already been made, without knowing why it is made so, but it makes something quite original, entirely different from what has been done up to that day; it is thus not a mere copying of something gone before, but itself makes a copy for later people to follow." [1] Here, arising from the fact that not only is poetry imitation, but its general mode also is imitation, there is confusion of thought between 'imitation,' used as an æsthetic term denoting the relation between art and nature, and as a psychological term descriptive of the process of poetic activity. But the general position is clear. 'Imitation' may be used in two senses, the bare reproduction of the actual, "evidentemente rassomigliare," or in a nobler and more artistic sense, the idealisation of nature by the medium of the poetic faculty. The first of these, Castelvetro

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 68. Si può adunque dalle cose sopradette ricogliere, che altra è la rassomiglianza che è naturale agli huomini, e altra è la rassomiglianza che è richiesta alla poesia. Perciocchè la rassomiglianza naturale agli huomini, la quale è inestata in loro da fanciullezza e per la quale imparano quello che da prima imparano et alla quale tutti sono disposti più che gli altri animali e per conseguente della quale anchora facendola essi si ralegrano, non è altro che seguitare l'essempio, e fare quella cosa medesima che altri fa, senza sapere la cagione perchè si faccia così. Ma la rassomiglianza richiesta alla poesia non solamente non seguita l'essempio altrui proposto, o non fa quella cosa medesima, che già è stata fatta, senza sapere la cagione perchè si faccia così, ma fa una cosa del tutto divisa dalle fatte infino a quel dì, e proponesi altrui, così si può dire, essempio da seguitare.

calls "photographic imitation, which is properly the painter's"; the second, "the art of creating,"[1] which is properly the poet's. The function of the former, and lower type of imitation is solely a photographic reproduction, "to present clearly to the mind's eye that which is removed from it either by distance of time or of place, and to make it as visible as if it were actually before the bodily eye"[2]: and indeed Castelvetro thinks that

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 607. In a note on the *Poetics*, xxv, Castelvetro writes:—"Quasi dica Aristotele sono due arti tra se diverse, l'arte del rassomigliare evidentemente, e l'arte del fingere." Castelvetro accepts the division, but is of the opinion that Aristotle, in this particular passage at least, regarded the former as the art of poetry. Hence he rejects what he believes to be Aristotle's conclusion, and gives his own—*P. d' A.*, pp. 611, 612. Adunque Arte in questo testo è presa diversamente. Perciocchè si prende Arte per sapere usare la fittione delle cose credibili et incredibili, della quale il fine sia l'accrescimento della maraviglia nella narratione. E si prende Arte per sapere prendere le cose vere o falsificate, della quale il fine sia l'evidente rassomiglianza. Hora si parla prima dell' arte che ha il suo fine nell' accrescimento della maraviglia nella narratione, perciocchè questa è più propria del poeta, e poi si parla di quella che ha il suo fine nell' evidente rassomiglianza, che è più propria del dipintore.

2. *Ibid*, p. 601. Io dico . . . che in questo luogo (*i.e.*, *Poetices*, xxv) egli non oscuramente voglia, che la dirittura dell' arte poetica consista nel sapere bene rassomigliare, ciò è, presentare chiaramente agli occhi della mente con parole harmonizzate quello, che ci è lontano, o per distanza di luogo, o per distanza di tempo, e farcelo vedere non altramente, che se ci fosse dinanzi agli occhi della fronte, e che in ciò habbia la poesia la sua perfettione. Del quale parere sono stati per lo passato molti dottori di questa arte, e sono al presente assaissimi. Ma è da porre mente, che questa sarebbe cosa molto diversa da quella che è stata insegnata adietro, quando in poesia s'attribuito il primo luogo alla constitutione della favola, ciò è, alla rassomiglianza d'una attione possibile ad avenire, e non alla rassomiglianza evidente delle cose lontane, e non presenti a noi. Perciocchè se in questa evidente rassomiglianza fosse il colmo della poesia, seguirebbe anchora, che nulla monterebbe, che si rassomigliasse historia o favola, ciò è, o uno accidente vero et avenuto, o uno accidente imaginato, e possibile ad avenire.

Aristotle is wrongly of the opinion that in this type of imitation "poetry has its perfection." [1] The attribution of this extreme opinion to Aristotle is no doubt unjust: but it has a partial justification in Aristotle's remarks on the ugly in art,[1] and Castelvetro lays his finger on the radical fallacy by his observation that "if in this photographic imitation was the perfection of poetry, the nature of the object of imitation would be of no account whatever." [2]

Imitation, then, as an æsthetic term, is not 'copying.' "Poetry makes a fable and imitates a human action, not as it was, or is, or is said to be, or is imagined to be, but as it ought to be" [3]: that is, the poet must idealise. But idealisation is not the creation of a new and golden world in comparison with which that of nature is but brazen. Nature in her intentions is impeded by accidental obstacles: her essential excellence appears but rarely in its full development. But art seizes nature's aims, learns her methods, and, unrestrained, draws them forth to their natural perfection, as if in rivalry with her. Art is not a thing different from nature, nor can it pass beyond the limits of nature: but it sets out to do the same as does nature; because the light of knowledge, which by natural gift is

1. *Poetics*, iv, 3. Objects which in themselves we view with pain, we delight to contemplate when reproduced with minute fidelity: such as the forms of the most ignoble animals and of dead bodies. (Butcher.)

2. See p. 35, note 2.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 586. La poesia fa una favola e rassomiglia una attione humana, non quale fu, o è, o si dice che è, o altri s'imagina che sia, ma quale dee essere.

scattered hither and thither and appears in diverse men in diverse places and times, is gathered together and united by art." [1] Art is not nature to advantage dressed, but by art nature is drawn to the ideal. This process then ought not properly to be called imitation, but rather rivalry, "a rivalry between the poet and nature's arrangement or the course of earthly things." [2]

Castelvetro, as has been pointed out, confuses the æsthetic and the psychological senses of the word 'imitation'; but he strictly separates the twofold connotation of the word within the sphere of æsthetics—a copying, and an idealisation. Indeed he drives this so far as to make them antitheses. As a consequence, his theory is in some parts incomplete. He does not explicitly define the interdependence of the ideal and the actual: indeed, he prepares the way for a false separation of the two by his insisting that the poet is a creator, not a servile imitator; and in one particular instance, to be noted more fully later, namely, the rigid exclusion of the matter of history from that of poetry, the danger overtakes him. Yet in the main, he saves himself at the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 69. L'arte non è cosa diversa dalla natura, nè può passare oltre i confini della natura, et intende di fare quello stesso, che fa la natura: conciosiacosachè quel lume d' insegnamento, che è per dono naturale sparto in quà e in là, e appare in diversi huomini in diversi luoghi e tempi, si raccoglia e si componga insieme dall 'arte.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 68. Si può sicuramente affermare che questa rassomiglianza richiesta alla poesia non è, nè si dee, o si può appellare dirittamente o propriamente rassomiglianza, ma è, o si dee, o si può appellare gareggiamento del poeta e della dispositione della fortuna o del corso delle mondane cose.

expense of appearing at first sight, and indeed in some small measure of actually being, antagonistic to the idealism which is the poet's. He attacks the Aristotelian, and more apparently, the Platonic doctrine that the artist must hold before him the divine idea, the perfect example of beauty, and the poet, the idea of goodness, the perfect example of the moral substance, " uno essempio perfetto di sdegno, o di mansuetudine, o d'altri costumi." [1] In the first place, argues Castelvetro, the perfect example of beauty is formal, and hence its imitator is but a copyist restricted within formal limits.[2] In the second case, Castelvetro, like all his contemporaries, read into ' the idea of goodness,' ' the perfect example of wrath,' etc., a purely moral and not an æsthetic import [3]: and though he may be wrong in this moral interpretation, yet he clearly realises that as such, it is irrelevant in æsthetic criticism.[4] Moreover, the introduction of the type of moral perfection tends to promote a purely didactic function: poetry tends to become merely a book

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 669. 2. *Ibid*, p. 342.

3. *Ibid*, p. 342. E da por mente, che altra è la bontà rappresentata dal dipintore, et altra è la bontà rappresentata dal poeta, secondochè fu detto di sopra: perciocchè il dipintore rappresenta la bontà del corpo, ciò è, la bellezza, e'l poeta rappresenta la bontà dell' animo, ciò è, i buoni costumi.

4. *Ibid*, p. 40. E da por mente, che la poesia non riceve distintione di spetie per perfettioni di bontà o di vitio di persone introdotte nel poema, o di meno perfettione . . . . E appresso, che non è vero che il poeta debba havere nel animo suo una idea di somma perfettione del vitio o della virtu o pure della meno perfettione. Ma io dico bene che dee havere una idea nel animo suo della perfettissima e dilettevolissima historia.

of moral doctrine.[1] Above all,—and the bastard Platonism of many of Castelvetro's contemporaries, and the impressionism of art to-day show the need for the protest—false idealism is only another name for unreality and eccentricity. Minturno classed that poet as noblest, who, imitating the 'ideal,' "a veritate prorsus abhorret."[2] But, says Castelvetro, the artist must fix his eye on the object itself and not on an extraneous 'ideal': "the poet must have in his mind continually an idea of the most perfect and most delightful subject, from which he must never remove his attention when he is making his poem."[3] This recognition of the necessity of seeing the object as in itself it really is, leads Castelvetro to a further critical truth. The ideal is the universal, but the universal is not the 'average': Homer is ranked above Vergil, because the characters of the former are "particolareggiata," those of Vergil "universaleggiata";[4] that is, because Homer's are individual and naturally distinct, Vergil's, more abstract and conventionalised.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 669. Alcuni vogliono questa sia la ragione, perchè i poeti ei dipintori rassomiglino le cose come deono essere e le facciano più eccellenti che in verità non sono, o non possono essere, ciò è, che essi le rassomiglino tali, perchè sieno essempio nel quale gli huomini riguardando, e proponendoselo nella mente, debbano, operando secondo quello, dirizzare le loro attioni. 2. *De Poeta*, p. 54.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 40. Ma io dico bene, che (il poeta) dee havere una idea nel' animo suo della perfettissima e dilettevolissima historia [which from the context may be translated for our purpose, 'the object in reality'] dalla quale non si dee mai con la mente scostare quando fa il suo poema.

4. *Ibid*, p. 56. L'essempio dell' universaleggiata si può vedere nell' Eneida di Virgilio, sì come della particolareggiata nell' Iliada e nell' Odissea d'Homero.

CHAPTER IV.

The Subject of Poetry.

"Poetry is 'resemblance,' and its general mode is 'resemblance'"[1]: that is, poetry deals with the show of things, and is not cognitive; with truth (of fact, as always in this connection) it has nothing to do. "The function of a good poet is, through observation and insight, to imitate the truth of the accidents of humanity's lot, leaving the discovery of the hidden truth of natural and accidental things to the philosopher and the scientist."[2] From this position, Castelvetro never swerves: poetry is neither history nor natural science. "History, recording things happened, has not need to regard verisimilitude or necessity, but only truth of fact; poetry, describing things possible to happen, regards only verisimilitude or necessity, to establish the possibility, since it cannot regard truth of fact."[3]

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 12. Poesia è rassomiglianza, e la sua maniera generale è rassomiglianza.

2. *Ibid*, p. 29. Lo ufficio di buono poeta . . . . . è di speculando rassomigliare la verità degli accidenti fortunosi degli huomini . . . . lasciando il trovamento della verità nascosa delle cose naturali o accidentali al philosopho e all' artista.

3. *Ibid*, p. 187. L'historia in iscrivere le cose avenute non ha bisogno di riguardare nè a verisimilitudine nè a necessità, ma riguarda solamente alla verità; e la poesia in iscrivere le cose possibili ad avenire riguarda per istabilire la possibilità alla verisimilitudine o alla necessità, poichè non può riguardare alla verità.

History and science, dealing with fact, seek truth of fact (verità): poetry, dealing with the appearance of things (verisimilitudine) seeks pleasure, "di porgere per rassomiglianza diletto agli ascoltatori,"[1] and as its essence is 'resemblance,' "it can have no place in truth."[2]

Nothing could be more definitely stated. It is the core of Castelvetro's theory, and he exacts the necessary consequences to the utmost. His conclusions are just, their basis being fundamental. Yet between the beginning and the end, there are difficulties in the way. False reasons are alleged: true ones are pushed to an extreme where truth is near to falsity, and at times the very truth seems to obscure itself by engendering half truths which run to falsehood. The stumbling block seems, as a rule, to be the 'verisimile' theory, *i.e.*, Aristotle's theory of æsthetic semblance.

Poetry is imitation. "Imitation cannot be separated from the idea of the 'verisimile,' imitation meaning 'to make similar'; hence no part of poetry can be separated from the 'verisimile': indeed, the 'verisimile' is not one of those conditions necessary to poetry merely to increase

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 29.

2. *Ibid*, p. 586. Egli è adunque vero che la dipintura e l'altri arti formatrici d'imagini rassomigliano l'una delle tre cose, o la vera o la non vera; ma la non vera si divide in due, in quella che è famosa o parvente, e in quella che è convenevole. Ma in quanto rassomigliano la cosa vera, sono simili all' historia, e non alla poesia, la cui rassomiglianza non può haver luogo nella verità.

its beauty, but is proper and intrinsic to its essence, and in all parts the dominant quality "[1]: that is a sentence of Tasso's. And Castelvetro's exclusive word for 'imitation,' "rassomiglianza," shows him in agreement with Tasso. Castelvetro had drawn a line of firm demarcation between 'truth' and 'resemblance': 'verisimilitudine,' 'likeness of truth,' now makes him bring them together. The argument is typically scholastic. "Truth naturally existed before verisimilitude, and the thing represented before the thing representing: and as verisimilitude depends entirely on truth, and the thing representing depends entirely on the thing represented, so one cannot have a full and direct knowledge of the dependent things without a previous full knowledge of those on which they depend: hence necessarily before one has a complete and direct knowledge of verisimilitude and of the thing representing, one must have such a complete and direct knowledge of truth and of the thing represented, if one wishes to judge fully whether versimilitude and the thing representing have or have not those qualities they should have in relation to the truth

1. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi dell' Arte Poetica*, p. 201. L'imitazione non può essere discompagnata dal verisimile, perocchè tanto significa imitare, quanto far simile: non può dunque parte alcuna di poesia esser separata dal verisimile, ed in somma il verisimile non è una di quelle condizioni richieste nella poesia a maggior sua bellezza, ed ornamento, ma è propria ed intrinseca dell' essenza sua, ed in ogni sua parte sovra ogni altra cosa necessaria.

and the thing represented." [1] Hence the conclusion: the art of poetry depends entirely on the art of history, with which, for the greater part, it has its doctrine in common.[2] Closely associated with this, is the theory, to be dealt with later, of the necessity of a historical basis in poetry. But Castelvetro was convinced that history and poetry are distinct: he had stated his conviction definitely and succinctly; and he recovers the truth again by a sophism. It was the 'verisimile' which had driven him near to the rocks.

To measure the scope and the influence of the 'verisimile' theory is extremely difficult, owing, mainly, to a vagueness in the use of the word. In one sense, 'verisimilitudine' denotes 'inherent necessity,' 'æsthetic truth': in this sense, Castelvetro uses the word 'verisimile' as a translation of Aristotle's τό εἰκὸς, 'probable,' 'secondo verisimilitudine.' In another, and more

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 4. Prima di natura fu la verità, che la verisimilitudine, e prima di natura fu la cosa rappresentata, che la cosa rappresentante: e perciocchè la verisimilitudine dipende tutta dalla verità, et in lei riguarda, e la cosa rappresentante dipende tutta dalla rappresentata, et in lei riguarda, non si può havere conoscenza prima o diretta delle dipendenti e riguardanti cose, se ella non s'ha prima delle cose dalle quali dipendono, et alle quali riguardono, è di necessità che s'habbia prima conoscenza intera e ragionevole della verità e della cosa rappresentata, che della verisimilitudine e della cosa rappresentante, se si vuole pienamente e dirittamente poter giudicare, se la verisimilitudine e la cosa rappresentante hanno o non hanno quello che loro si conviene, e si confanno, o non si confanno in tutto, o in parte con la verità e con la cosa rappresentata.

2. *Ibid*, p. 6. Perchè non si può havere piena notitia della poesia, se non s'ha prima notitia piena dell' historia, dalla quale dipende la poesia, e alla quale riguarda, e con la qual ha gli'nsegnamenti communi per la maggior parte.

strictly correct sense, it denotes 'resemblance to the truth of the actual, to natural fact': this latter is the usual sense in which it is used in Renaissance criticism and in Castelvetro. A passage in Minturno, however, marks the way in which both senses tended to merge: "the narration will be 'verisimile,' if the things narrated correspond to the persons, times, places and causes; if the things appear to be told, as was possible, or necessary, or like to truth that they would happen."[1] This confusion is common to all the Renaissance critics, Castelvetro included.

The implication of Castelvetro's theory of verisimilitude he states as follows: "The thing representing ought to have that which the thing represented has, no more, no less";[2] and Scaliger writes, "omnia oportet quam proxime accedere ad veritatem."[3] It will be at once evident how far the Renaissance 'verisimilitudine' is removed from Aristotle's doctrine of æsthetic semblance. Of the two senses in which the Italian critics used the word, the first, 'inherent probability,' though strictly speaking not verisimilitude at all, is nevertheless true in its æsthetic application. But the second and the one

1. *Arte Poetica*, p. 22. Verisimil sarà la narrazione, se quelle cose, che si narrano alle persone, a' tempi, a' luoghi, alle cagioni corrisponderanno: se le cose paranno esser dette, come fu possibile, o necessario, o simile al vero, che quelle avvenissero.

2. *P. d' A.*, p. 240. La cosa rappresentante dee havere quella, che ha la cosa rappresentata, e non più, nè meno.

3. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 708.

philologically more justifiable, is true only to a degree, for its implied idea of the theory of æsthetic semblance generally loses its immediate æsthetic bearing, and becomes a principle, not of æsthetic, but of natural law. As such, it brings forth such pests as the dramatic unities, imposing the laws of fact and of natural phenomena on the productions of art and genius: and Castelvetro is in this its victim. It engenders the principle, irrelevant if not entirely false, that the artist seeks to deceive his readers or listeners into believing that the figments of art are real: Minturno flounders here, and talks of "our intellect being deceived"[1] by the life-like in art; Tasso bears him company with his doctrine "that the poet should deceive his readers by the semblance of truth";[2] and Castelvetro, too, stumbles, accusing some poets of "diminishing our faith in their creations and showing that these are but imagined,"[3] but he does not fall altogether, for the noxious difficulty-overcome theory, fixing as it does, attention on the apparent signs of the artist in the work of art, saves him ultimately. Further, this specious verisimilitude

1. *Arte Poetica*, p. 42. Ingannasi adunque il nostro intelletto, ov'egli delle cose, che avvengono, questa differenza non conosca.

2. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi dell' Arte Poetica*, p. 199. Dovendo il poeta colla sembianza della verità ingannare i lettori.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 210. Non sono da lodare que' poeti, che raccontando le cose incerte e possibili ad avenire, usano i modi di parlare, per gli quali diminuiscono la fede a quello, che dicono e monstrano anche che è imaginato. Perhaps in this passage it is the expression rather than the thought which is reminiscent of Corneille's doctrine of artistic deception.

reduces creation to imitation: but here Castelvetro is inoculated by his insistence on the poet's originality. And finally, it produces pedantic absurdities innumerable, in Castelvetro as in others: comedy is forbidden to have a chorus;[1] servants, captains, and messengers in drama are to have only a generic name;[2] the Corydons and Thyrses of pastoral poetry must speak in character as ignorant rustics;[3] and, lastly, the epic must be divided in a most ludicrous and arbitrary form, arranged in accordance with a fantastic idea of the time required in its perusal.[4]

Such is the toll that verisimilitude exacts from Castelvetro. He accepts the theory almost without reserve, and generally in its most literal sense: and as he deals chiefly with the drama, where the material components and implements are most like those of actual life, he pushes it to the bitter end—"la cosa rappresentante dee havere quella, che ha la cosa rappresentata, e non più, nè meno." So verisimilitude is an essential part of Castelvetro's theory. But in estimating its relative importance, we have to consider other circumstances. In the first place, he often gives to 'verisimile,' no more than a sound æsthetic signification, 'probable.' Secondly, verisimilitude is demanded, but there is great laxity in its connotation, many things strictly outside the 'verisimile' being admitted in a larger sense as the subject of poetry; thus, he includes under the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 87. 2. *Ibid*, p. 194. 3. *Ibid*, p. 578. 4. *Ibid*, p. 109.

"verisimile" and "believable," "those things which are like what has happened once; or are like those which, though apparently not 'verisimile,' nevertheless have happened in full detail and extent; or at least, those things which are an agglomeration of parts, each part of which is like some particular thing which has actually happened in diverse accidents and to diverse people, though the full series of events and things has never been present together in actuality." [1] Further, although the Fable is "neither true nor 'verisimile,' but a lie," [2] yet it is admitted, for a time at any rate, as a poetic species. And finally (though this shows the weakest side of Castelvetro) historic fact is more important than the 'verisimile'; "a contradiction of history is a greater sin than a contradiction of verisimilitude." [3] This last remark of Castelvetro's is worthy of Scaliger, who, detecting a minor error of geography in a Greek poem by Silius, raves in

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 186. Egli è vero, che bisogna, acciocchè le cose avenevoli e non avenute anchora sieno verisimili e credibili, o che sieno simili a quelle, che sono avenute altra volta, o a quelle, che havevano minore verisimilitudine di dovere avenire, e non dimeno sono avenute, o almeno, che le parti d'esse, o le particelle sieno simili a quelle parti o particelle, che sono avenute in diversi accidenti a diversi persone.

2. *Ibid*, p. 24. Il soggetto loro dunque non è vero, nè verisimile, ma bugiardo. Egli è vero, che la bugia è tale, che non gli fa sprezzare, perciocchè, anchora che così fatto soggetto non ci sia porto nè come vero, nè come verisimile, ma come bugiardo, non dimeno ci diletta.

3. *Ibid*, p. 188. Lo'ntrodurre nuovi nomi di re et attribuir loro nuove attioni è contradire all' historia, e alla fama, e peccare nella verità manifesta: il che è molto maggiore peccato nel comporre la favola, che peccare nella verisimilitudine.

pedantic fury, "Surely for crimes like this, Plato did well to bar poets out of his state." [1]

With the above limitations, then, Castelvetro embodied verisimilitude in his theory of poetry: and this, in some measure, obscured the hard and fast division he had made between history and poetry. It is only a short, though illogical, step from the idea of verisimilitude, in its gross sense, to the idea that historic fact is sacred: if an action has the sanction of actual, though unique, occurrence (verità), then, so runs the argument, it must necessarily have the quality of verisimilitude: that is Scaliger's position. Castelvetro's is different. Verisimilitude is an artistic means by which the semblance of actuality is created: but there is no need to create this semblance when the action is attested by the record of actuality, *i.e.*, by history. Hence to sin against historic fact is a crime unforgivable. So, Castelvetro missed that full release of poetry from natural law, which is expressed, perhaps unconsciously, by Minturno's "Num quam ne fallit, qui omnia confingit?" [2] and by Sidney's "Now for the Poet, he nothing affirms, and therefore never lyeth."

But after this descent, Castelvetro returned to his separation of poetry and history, to press it,

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 689. Hæc maximo cum dispendio veritatis: ut non sine magna causa Plato vetuerit poetas ingredi suam civitatem.

2. *De Poeta*, p. 68. This is a remark of one of the four interlocutors of Minturno's dialogue, the man named Syncerus. Throughout Syncerus upholds the Platonic doctrines, but the consensus of opinion is against him. It is in his words, however, rather than in those of the other three speakers, that Sidney's Apology has its roots.

however, beyond due measure. "Poetry is similitude or imitation of history: and as history is divided into two parts, namely, matter and words, so poetry is divided into two parts similarly, namely, matter and words. But within these two parts poetry and history differ: the matter of history is the recorded fact, its words, those of ordinary human speech; the matter of poetry is solely the invention of the poet's genius, and its words are not those of ordinary speech, but are composed in a metrical arrangement by the poet's genius." [1] The position thus stated is strengthened by Castelvetro's ideas of the originality of the poet, and of the 'difficulty overcome': and so the fallacy creeps in. Now the matter of poetry ought to be similar to the matter of history, and to imitate it; but it ought not to be the same, since if it were the same, it would not be similar to it nor imitate it; and if it were not similar to it and did not imitate it, the poet, as far as concerns the matter of his poetry, would have employed no labour and would have

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 28. Poesia è similitudine o rassomiglianza d' historia. E, si come historia si divide in due parti principali, ciò è in materia et in parole, così poesia si divide in due parti principali, che sono similmente materia e parole. Ma in queste due parti sono differenti tra se historia e poesia, che historia non ha la materia, che le sia apprestata dallo' ngegno dell' historico, ma le è apprestata dal corso delle mondane cose, o dal volere manifesto o occulto di dio, et ha le parole apprestate dal' historico sì, ma tali quali s'usano ragionando, e poesia ha sua materia trovata et imaginata dallo'ngegno del poeta, et ha le parole non tali, quali s'usano ragionando, perciocchè non s'usa tra gli huomini di ragionare in versi, ma le ha composte in misurati versi per l'opera dello'ngegno del poeta.

displayed no fineness of genius in inventing it."[1] The position which Castelvetro holds rigidly throughout is thus definitely formulated: poetry cannot imitate actions which have actually happened; its subject must be those actions "possible to happen but not yet happened," "possibili ad avenire, ma non già avenute." Tasso is surely more true, though in the form in which he states the truth, there is foreboding of the evil to come; the coincidence of poetic matter and of historic fact, instead of being irrelevant, is to become vital: Tasso's truth becomes more dangerous æsthetically than Castelvetro's falsity. The poet and the historian, says Tasso, may treat of the same events, but it will be from different points of view, "since the historian narrates them as true, and the poet imitates them as verisimilar."[2] But Castelvetro was not far from the right path: glossing a remark of Aristotle's,[3] he says: "If it shall happen that a poet embodies in his poetry things happened, not, however, knowing at the time that they have happened, and consequently

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 28. Hora la materia della poesia dee essere simile alla materia della historia, e rassomigliarla, ma non dee essere quella stessa, perciocchè, se fosse quella stessa, non sarebbe simile, o la rassomiglierebbe, e se non fosse simile e non la rassomigliasse, il poeta, quanto è alla materia, non si sarebbe punto faticato, nè havrebbe mostrata agutezza d' ngegno in trovarla.

2. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 70. Perchè l'istorico le narra come vere, e il poeta l'imita come verisimili.

3. *Poetics*, ix, 9. κἂν ἄρα συμβῇ γενόμενα ποιεῖν, οὐθὲν ἧττον ποιητής ἐστι. And even if he chances to take an historical subject, he is none the less a poet. (Butcher.)

himself having imagined them, he will be a poet just as much as if the things had not happened, for he himself has employed that labour in invention by which the title of poet is earned " :[1] overlooking the literal explanation offered in this passage, and reading between the lines, it is evident that to Castelvetro the important thing is that poetry should be artistic and not historic.

Still, let his opinion on the poet's matter as sharply distinguished from the historian's in its relations to the occurrence of fact, count as the heresy it undoubtedly is, yet it served to strengthen Castelvetro's main thesis that poetry is not history, by purging it of the evil with which a too gross regard of the ' verisimile ' had threatened it. And this fundamental truth he had already sufficiently and justly established.

Castelvetro marked off poetry from history primarily by the distinction in material and in function. History, whose material is fact, seeks truth : poetry, whose sphere is resemblance, seeks only pleasure. On a lower level—and the one dwelt on at most length, however, by Castelvetro —the distinction becomes one, not of function and material, but of matter. And that involves him in the eternal controversy of matter and form. Platonism, by its insistence on idealisation, counteracted the tendency to formalism—a

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 215. Se averrà, che il poeta non sapendo le cose essere avenute et havendolesi egli da se imaginate, le riporrà nel suo poema sarà poeta non altramente che se quelle mai avenute non fossero, perciocchè egli ha durata la fatica per la quale altri guadagna il titolo di poeta.

tendency to which Aristotelianism often degenerated. But true Platonism never made the distinction between poetry and history one of matter alone : it never prescribed what was poetic subject, what historic, and what philosophic. On the contrary, it tended to merge them in the ideal and by allotting to each a uniform didactic function. Scaliger is an extreme formalist : "electionem summam esse in poeta virtutem et sui fastidium," [1] he says of diction. Minturno is, as usual, inconsistent, formalist at one moment, exuberantly Platonic the next. Castelvetro and Tasso, as will be shown later, are quite opposed to formalism. The logical conclusion to Scaliger's theory is that everything may be matter for poetry : indeed, Scaliger makes verse the matter as well as the form : as in oratory the matter is really letters and syllables, so is diction in poetry; and its form is the metrical arrangement of this.[2] Minturno also believes that there is nothing with which poetry cannot deal; "there is nothing impossible to write of with the poetic faculty."[3] But one of the most truly Platonic of Renaissance critics, Fracastoro, comes to a similar conclusion; "everything is suit-

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 570.

2. *Ibid*, p. 125. Orationis autem materia quid aliud sit quam litera, syllaba, et dictio? id est aer, aut membrana, aut mens, in quibus ea sint tanquam in subjecto. Quare in Caesaris statua aes erit materia : in Poesi dictio. In statua forma exprimens vigorem aut motum aut statum aut sessionem aut eiusmodi : in Poesi eadem omnia in lineamentis ac dispositionibus dictionum.

3. *De Poeta*, p. 69. Idque etiam adjungo, nihil esse de quo scribi poetica facultate non possit.

able for the poet's matter, if only it can be adorned."[1] And Patrizzi earns Prof. Saintsbury's warm eulogy by a similar proposition; "the matter of sciences, of arts, and of history can be fitting subject for poetry, provided it is treated poetically."[2] Perhaps Tasso's enunciation of the first cardinal point a poet must regard, indicates the fallacy underlying the conditioning clause in the quotations from Fracastoro and Patrizzi: "above all, the poet must be careful to choose his matter such that it is capable in itself of receiving that more excellent form which the poet seeks to give to it.": [3] that is, not all matter can be embodied in poetic form. Castelvetro puts the case with equal clearness. "There are inexcusable errors in the art of poetry; and the first of them consists in choosing an unpoetic subject."[4]

1. *Naugerius, sive de Poetica*, p. 337. Omnis enim materia poetæ convenit, dummodo exornari possit.

2. Patrizzi, F., *Della Poetica* (Ferrara, 1586.) [Quoted by Prof. Saintsbury.] Le materia da scienza, o da arte, o da istoria compresi possano esser convenevoli soggetti a poesia e a poemi, pure che poeticamente sieno trattate.

3. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 27. Tasso gives the three cardinal points as follows:—a sceglier materia tale, che sia atta a ricever in se quella più eccellente forma, che l'artifizio del poeta cerca d'introdurci; ed a darla tal forma; ed a vestirla ultimamente con que' più rari ornamenti, che alla natura di lei siano convenienti.

4. *P. d' A.*, p. 597. Gli errori, li quali si commettono nell' arte della poetica, e non sono degni di scusa, si possono commettere in cinque modi, o in eleggere materia non poetica, secondo che fanno coloro, li quali trattano le scienze, o l'arte, o l'historie in versi, o, posto che eleggano materia poetica, non formano la favola come si dee: il che si fa o in sopraporvi cosa superflua, o in privarla di cosa bisognevole, o in trasportar le parti dal suo luogo convenevole, o in introdurvi cosa nociva.

Here then, is another mode of distinguishing between poetry and history or philosophy or science; not only by function, but by matter. The distinction of function takes the special form in Castelvetro that not only is pleasure the end of poetry, but a very particular pleasure, the pleasure of the uneducated mob, the 'moltitudine rozza.' The distinction of matter is based on Castelvetro's conviction that the marks of the poet are his originality and clearly apparent signs of difficulties overcome. We are now in a position to see how Castelvetro applied his theories in the decision of the bounds of poetic subject. It will be evident that he does not always, nor at greatest length, insist on his primary and fundamental distinction, though all the threads of his theory are so inextricably woven together that the one principle involves the other.

In the first place, fundamental and Aristotelian, poetry is an imitation of action, and of human action. The argument in Castelvetro runs as follows. Poetry is 'an imitation of history,' its "essempio et imagine." History does not limit itself to a record of human action: should poetry therefore? He divides the matter of history into three classes. "First, that which is always of one form, and always was, and always will be, being found perpetual in animate and inanimate things":[1] as, for instance, the nature of marble,

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 37. Una delle quali è quella, che è sempre d'una forma e sempre fu, e sarà quella stessa a tutti gl'historici in tutti i secoli, e si trova perpetua nelle cose non animate et animate.

the facts of purely natural phenomena, and even of natural phenomena in human life, such as the immutable conditions of generation. "Secondly, those actions, by their rarity having the semblance of the miraculous, of inanimate things, or indeed of animate things lacking the function of reason":[1] as, for instance, the falling of the statue of a murdered man on the murderer. "The third class is that of human actions, a class common to history and poetry, with the difference already given, that history requires actions which have happened, poetry those which have not happened, but which are possible to happen."[2] There is no need to point out the insufficiency of this pedantic classification. It is sufficient to give Castelvetro's conclusion. "Poetry cannot take the first class of matter, since it is always the same, never varies, is incapable of imitation, and provides no pleasure by imitation. Neither can poetry embody the second class of matter, for it is miraculous, and hence the poet would have to relate it just as it happened, even as a historian; so he would have no opportunity to show his invention, nor to exercise the function by which

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 37. La seconda maniera è d'attioni di cose non animate o pure anchora animate, ma senza ragione, che per la rarità loro hanno sembianza di miracola.

2. *Ibid*, p. 38. La terza maniera è quella dell' attioni humane, della quale parla Aristotele qui e per tutto questo libro, e la quale è materia commune all' historia, e alla poesia, con la differenza già detta, che l'historia la richiede di cose avenute, e la poesia di cose non avenute ma possibili ad avenire.

he can be judged a poet."[1] Hence, the only class of matter which is fit subject for poetry, is the third; human action alone.

Human action is the whole scope of poetry. With this as his first principle, Castelvetro elaborates his scheme of poetic subject. In the first place, he interprets 'human' rigidly and narrowly: but to 'action,' he allows a more inclusive sense. Thus, the action is not necessarily an outward act: spiritual action, the play of the thoughts "which stand hidden in the mind," is included.[2] On the other hand, the subject of poetry must be strictly and directly 'human.' The imitation of animal life, of blue birds and chanticleers, is not sufficient: "Ovid erred here, who wrote his Books of Fishes in verse, and Oppian, who wrote of similar things in verse."[3] Poetry descriptive of nature as

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 38. Hora la poesia non può prendere, nè prende la prima maniera per materia, perciocchè sempre è quella stessa, nè si varia, nè riceve rassomiglianza, nè porge diletto per rassomiglianza . . . . . Nè parimente la poesia riceve la seconda, essendo anzi miracolosa che non, e convenendo al poeta raccontarla apunto, quale è avenuta e non altramente che sarebbe l'historico, in guisa che non può mostrare inventione sua niuna, nè essercitar l'ufficio suo per lo quale possa essere guidicato poeta, e dilettare altrui per rassomiglianza.

2. *Ibid*, p. 144. La favola adunque, come dice Aristotele. è la constitutione delle cose, ciò è, come io interpreto, la' nventione delle cose, o il soggetto. La quale inventione, o soggetto, si divide in inventione di cose visibili e di cose invisibili. Cose visibili sono quelle, che caggiono sotto il senso visivo, come uccisioni, adulteri, e simili cose. Cose invisibili sono quelle, che non caggiono sotto il senso visivo, come sono pensieri che stanno nascosti nella mente humana.

3. *Ibid*, p. 38. In ciò presero errore Ovidio, che scrisse in verso il libro de' pesci, e Oppiano che pure scrisse in verso di simile materia.

distinct from animal life, is not specifically mentioned in this place as outside the limits of the poet's art: but the above argument implies that; and moreover, never regarding description of nature as other than natural philosophy, "la scienza delle cose naturali,"[1] Castelvetro definitely proscribes it for other reasons.

So far then, poetry is an imitation of human action, as, though not exclusively, is history. How then, is the matter of poetry distinguished from that of history? History deals with events which have happened in the progress of the world: poetry has its subject invented by the poet's genius; for if the poet takes a historic subject, a thing or event which has actually happened, he has no opportunity of displaying the labour he has had or ought to have had in invention."[2] Hence, hosts of authors are forbidden the glory and the title of poets: "Lucan, Silius Italicus, and Fracastoro in his 'Joseph,' are to be removed from the ranks of the poets and deprived of the glorious title of poets for having treated in their works things already treated by the historian,

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 27.

2. *Ibid*, p. 28. Historia ha la materia . . . apprestata dal corso delle mondane cose, o dal volere manifesto o occulto di dio: . . . . poesia ha sua materia trovata e imaginata dallo'ngegno del poeta . . . . . Perchè adunque prendendo il poeta materia di historia, ciò è, di cose già avenute, non dura fatica niuna, nè quindi appare, se sia buono o reo poeta, ciò è, se sappia, o non sappia ben trovare cose simili al vero e rassomigliarle, non può essere lodato, anzi è biasimato, e giudicato essere fornito di poco giudicio, che con la scorza e col colore delle parole poetiche habbia voluto uccellare i lettori o gli ascoltatori, quasi sotto quelle si contenga materia poetica, e esso acquistarne commendatione falsa.

or at least already happened in actual fact."[1] For similar reasons, science, philosophy, and the arts are not matter for poetry, because they are not the pure creation of the poet's imagination, but of the discussions and the long experience of philosophers and scientists, and "if the poet makes them his subject, he is merely covering that subject with poetic words," not inventing it:[2] so the ranks of the poets are further depleted; "Nicander, Fracastoro, who with others have written of medicine in verse, Aratus, Pontanus, who with others have written of astrology in verse, Empedocles, Lucretius, who have examined the science of nature in verse, Hesiod, Vergil, who have taught agriculture in verse, all these ought to be judged to have done ill and ought to lose the glory and the name of poet, having erred in their choice of subject."[3]

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 29. Laonde ragionevolmente Lucano, Silio Italico, e Girolamo Fracastoro nel suo Guisepho, sono da rimuovere dalla schiera de' poeti, e da privare del glorioso titolo della poesia, perciocchè hanno trattato materia nelle loro scritture, trattata prima dagl' historico, e quando non fosse anchora stata prima trattata dagl' historici, basta bene che fosse prima avenuta e non imaginata da loro.

2. *Ibid*, p. 29. Quindi anchora si comprende che scienza o arte non può essere materia di poesia, nè si possono con lode richiudere in poema, conciosia cosa che la scienza e l'arte già considerate e comprese per ragioni necessarie e verisimili e per lunga esperienza da philosophi e da artisti tengano il luogo d'historia e di cose già avenute, quanto è al poeta, il quale con le parole solamente poetiche copre quel soggetto di scienza o d'arte che è stato trovato e scritto da altri, e di cui si può dire essere stata composta già l'historia, non v'havendo il poeta parte niuna, per la quale si possa vantare d'essere poeta.

3. *Ibid*, p. 28. Nicandro, Sereno, Girolamo Fracastoro, li quali con alcuni altri hanno scritto di medecina in versi, e Aratro, Manilio, Giovanni Pontano, li quali con certi altri

But still further. As poetry is an imitation of action, those poets who treat solely of the 'manners' of men, and so usurp the function of moral philosophy, are cast out: hence satire is no true poetic species, "for its subject is the manners of men and philosophic lessons in conduct." [1]

This reference to the didactic content of satire is an echo of other objections, based on the function of poetry, which Castelvetro had already formulated against historic, philosophic, and scientific matter in poetry: and these have not the specious appearance of the ones based on the mere fact of occurrence or of non-occurrence, 'cose avenute' or 'cose non già avenute.' He now returns to this fundamental position. "Beyond this, there is another reason more easily apparent, why the matter of sciences and of the arts cannot be the subject of poetry: for poetry was invented solely for delight and recreation, to delight and to recreate the minds of the uncultured mob and the common people, and they do not understand subtle reasons and arguments removed from vulgar use, such as philosophers

hanno trattato d'astrologia in versi, e Empedocle, Lucretio, li quali hanno essaminate le cose di natura in versi, e Hesiodo, Virgilio, che hanno mostrata l'arte del coltivare la villa in versi, e Lucano, Silio Italico, e Girolamo Fracastoro con molti altri, che hanno prese historie avenute da scrivere ne' loro poemi, non debbano essere stimati haver fatto bene, e perdono la gloria e'l nome di poeta, havendo fallato in eleggere il soggetto.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 106. La quale satira perchè ha per soggetti costumi e insegnamenti philosophici, non poteva essere ricevuta per poesia lodevole e commendabile.

adopt in investigating truth and scientists in formulating sciences. Hence, not understanding, they would have no pleasure and delight, but on the contrary displeasure." [1]

So the great and unpardonable crime in a poet is "to choose an unpoetic subject, such as do those who treat the sciences, the arts and history in verse." [2] It is also an error, when "putting off that function of narration which is his own, the poet assumes the office of preacher and of censor of morals": [3] for poetry is neither history, science, moral nor natural philosophy: nor, which is the same thing, says Castelvetro (and in this mistaken identity lies the fallacy), can the matter of these arts and sciences be the matter of poetry. And in the fundamental truth and the relatively

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 29. Ma oltre a questo, la materia delle scienze e delle arti per un'altra ragione più manifesta al senso non può essere soggetto della poesia, conciosia cosa che la poesia sia stata trovata solamente per dilettare, e per ricreare, io dico, per dilettare e per ricreare gli animi della rozza moltitudine e del commune popolo, il quale non intende le ragioni, nè le divisioni, nè gli argomenti sottili e lontani dal' uso degl' idioti, quali adoperano i philosophi in investigare la verità delle cose e gli artisti in ordinare le arti, e non gli' intendendo conviene, quando altri ne favella, che egli ne senta noia e dispiacere, perciocchè c'increscе fuori di modo naturalmente, quando altri parla in guisa che non lo possiamo intendere.

2. *Ibid*, p. 597. . . . . eleggere materia non poetica, secondo che fanno coloro, li quali trattano le scienze, o l'arti, o l'historie in versi.

3. *Ibid*, p. 545. Senza che non si fa poco odioso altrui, scoprendo certa superbia e confidanza di bontà, quando, posposto l'ufficio di narratore, che era suo proprio, imprenda l'ufficio di predicatore, e di corregitore di costumi fuori di tempo, nel quale errore non cade mai Homero, ma sì Virgilio alcuna volta.

almost negligible falsity of this, Castelvetro stood alone in his time.

Further, Castelvetro asserts, poetry is not painting. Echoing Horace's 'ut pictura poesis,' and giving the phrase to Sidney, Minturno writes, "It would be superfluous to offer instructions for painting, for the painter is so close to the poet, that a poem is but a speaking picture, and a picture a silent poem."[1] Tasso is of the same opinion; "the poet is a speaking painter,"[2] and "his subject is the same as the painter's, for the same matter, the Trojan war, or the wanderings of Ulysses, can be taken by painter and poet alike."[3] But Castelvetro, again, is alone in distinguishing the two arts; and that, by their matter—though at the same time he has a very unsatisfactory conception of the power of the canvas and the brush. At the outset he limits painting to portraiture. Historic painting, and that which would tell a story, are not of the true species: "that which in poetry is first and of most account, the imitation of a human action as it ought to be, is the last in painting and of no account whatever, namely, that which painters

1. *De Poeta*, p. 100. Nam de pictura supervacuum est docere, cum pictor ita sit finitimus poetae, ut nihil aliud esse poeticam dicant, quam loquentem picturam, nec aliud hanc quam poeticam tacentem.

2. *Opere* xi, *Lezione nell' accademia ferrarese*, p. 51. Il poeta è un pittore parlante.

3. *Ibid*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 9. Nè già pajono diverse (poesia ed istoria) per la diversità delle cose imitate; perchè il medesimo argomento della guerra di Troja, o degli errori di Ulisse potra esser preso dal pittore o dal poeta.

call 'history.'" [1] Further, "in painting, the history or the plot is of no account." [2] Hence, the end of painting is bare imitation, mere copying: [3] that is, the painter is not 'original,' but seeks merely to copy truth of fact; and "the perfection of his art consists in making similar to the living, the natural and the thing imitated, whether beautiful or ugly": [4] that is, the art of painting is like that of history, not that of poetry. This is much the same distinction, though on a lower level, as that which Longinus made between statuary and poetry. Castelvetro, we have seen, limits painting to portraiture: but the limitation he drives even further than that. The portraits of the great Italian masters were mere lines and colours to him, revealing no dispositions of the will, no inclinations of the heart, no aspirations of the mind: the 'goodness' which the painter imitates is solely the goodness of the body, *i.e.*, beauty, and that, says Castelvetro, is quite different from the goodness poets imitate, the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 586. E da porre mente, che quella cosa, la quale è nella poesia la primiera, e da stimare più, ciò è, il rassomigliare, come si dee, una attione humana, è l'ultima nella pittura, e da non istimare punto, ciò è, quella che si suole domandare historia appo i dipintori.

2. *Ibid*, p. 138. Nell' opere dell' arte della pittura, l'historia o vera favola non è di niuna stima.

3. *Ibid*, p. 612. Quella (arte) che ha il suo fine nell' evidente rassomiglianza, è più propria del dipintore.

4. *Ibid*, p. 342. La perfettione della pittura consiste in fare che paia simile al vivo, e al naturale, e al rappresentato, o bello, o brutto, o mezzano, che si sia.

goodness of the mind, *i.e.*, character.[1] Minturno has the same idea: "cum ille speciem exteriorem, hic interiorem effingat, ille corporis lineamenti, hic animi formam aspectus fugientem ante oculos ponat." [2] It is plain, then, that Castelvetro made the nature of the matter represented the basis of the distinction between poetry and painting. With truer insight, Lessing established it on consideration of the fundamental difference in the means of representation: painting uses forms and colours in space, poetry articulate sounds in time; hence, Lessing argues, bodies with their visible properties are the special subjects of painting, actions the special subjects of poetry.[3] Castelvetro has nothing of this depth, but he does distinguish between poetry and painting, and by

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 342. E da por mente, che altra è la bontà rappresentata dal dipintore, e altra è la bontà rappresentata dal poeta, perciocchè il dipintore rappresenta la bontà del corpo, ciò è, la bellezza, e'l poeta rappresenta la bontà dell' animo, ciò è, i buoni costumi.

2. *De Poeta*, p. 25.

3. Lessing, *Laocoon*, especially ch. xvi. Wenn es wahr ist, dass die Malerei zu ihren Nachahmungen ganz andere Mittel oder Zeichen gebrauchet, als die Poesie; jene nämlich Figuren und Farben in dem Raume, diese aber artikulierte Töne in der Zeit; wenn unstreitig die Zeichen ein bequemes Verhältnis zu dem Bezeichneten haben müssen: so können nebeneinander geordnete Zeichen auch nur Gegenstände, die nebeneinander, oder deren Teile nebeneinander existieren, aufeinander folgende Zeichen aber auch nur Gegenstände ausdrücken, die aufeinander, oder deren Teile aufeinander folgen. Gegenstände, die nebeneinander, oder deren Teile nebeneinander existieren, heissen Körper. Folglich sind Körper mit ihren sichtbaren Eigenschaften die eigentlichen Gegenstände der Malerei. Gegenstände, die aufeinander, oder deren Teile aufeinander folgen, heissen überhaupt Handlungen. Folglich sind Handlungen der eigentliche Gegenstand der Poesie.

that very fact, he anticipated the course of æsthetic theory. Like Lessing, he would have painting imitate bodies, portraits; and poetry imitate actions. When France borrowed his unities and his ' difficulté vaincue,' it might with a very salutary effect, have borrowed this too : we should at all events have been spared Delille.

CHAPTER V.

The Function of Poetry.

"The aim of poetry is to give, by imitation, delight to its listeners, leaving the discovery of the hidden truth of natural philosophy to the philosopher and the scientist, with their own method of delighting far removed from that of the poet."[1] Castelvetro stands firmly to this position. Poetry does not regard truth; hence it has no didactic aim. By nature and origin, it is centred on delight, "to delight and to recreate."[2] Aristotle, too, says Castelvetro, held this opinion when he was true to himself; "poetry was fashioned principally for delight, and not for utility, as Aristotle has shown":[3] and the Stagyrite is accused of inconsistency for embodying what Castelvetro regarded as a utilitarian end in his theory of the katharsis, to which Castelvetro appends the note, "Why is not delight sought here principally without meddling with utility,

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 29. . . . . di porgere per rassomiglianza diletto agli ascoltatori, lasciando il trovamento della verità nascosa della cose naturali o accidentali al philosopho e all'artista, con la loro propria via di dilettare molto lontana da quella del poeta.

2. *Ibid*, p. 30. La poesia è stata trovata, come dico, per dilettare e ricreare.

3. *Ibid*, p. 275. Poesia è stata trovata principalmente per diletto, e non per utilità, come Aristotele ha mostrato.

which ought to be of no account whatever?" [1] But Castelvetro recognises that Aristotle is generally sound in his adherence to a purely æsthetic function; "let those who think that poetry aims at teaching, or at teaching and delighting together, let those see that they do not set themselves up against Aristotle, who assigns to the aim of poetry nothing but delight." [2] His own creed is clearly stated; "the end of poetry is simply delight and recreation." [3] Further, the achievement of the end justifies any means. So, for instance, poets are accused of faults outside the art of poetry; they are also accused of faults within the art, some accidental, and some essential; but "an error in the very essence of the poetic art is justifiable, if the end is reached thereby." [4] A divergence from the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 275. Perchè non si cerca principalmente il diletto, senza haver cura dell' utilità? della quale non si dee tener conto niuno.

2. *Ibid*, p. 505. Coloro che vogliono, che la poesia sia trovata principalmente per giovare, o per giovare e per dilettare insieme, veggano che non s'oppongano all' autorità d' Aristotele, il quale qui e altrove non par, che le assegni altro che diletto, e se pure le concede alcuno giovamento gliele concede per accidente, come è la purgatione dello spavento e della compassione per mezzo della tragedia.

3. *Ibid*, p. 592. Il fine della poetica riguarda il diletto simplice, e la ricreatione degl' ascoltanti.

4. *Ibid*, p. 591. Non ogni peccato, che commette il poeta, posto che manifestamente sia peccato, è da attribuere per peccato non iscusevole al poeta. E prima non gli è da attribuere a peccato non iscusevole quello peccato che si commette in altra arte che nella sua, ciò è, in poesia. E appresso non gli è attribuito quello, che si commette per accidente. E ultimanente non gli è attribuito quello che si commette nella stessa arte di poesia non per accidente, quando non si distrugge il fine della poesia, ma si stabilisce.

academic rules of the art, from all rules, may similarly be justifiable: "in constructing the plot we should have no regard for the beginning, the middle, or the end of the action forming the plot, but the action or a part of it being taken, we should diligently consider if it is capable of doing what we seek to do, that is, if it is capable of delighting the spectators." [1] And the same method must determine our conception of the unity or duplicity of action: Castelvetro chooses the one "because it delights more." [2] The touchstone of poetry and the arbiter of its means, must be its capacity to give the proper æsthetic pleasure: with these criteria, Castelvetro rates tragedy above epic, "because it delights more." [3] Further, to Castelvetro, art and morality, or art and political philosophy are quite separate spheres, each with its own function and its own laws, in the one case, æsthetic, in the other, moral or political. Art is not didactic, nor, as art, is it to be judged by moral or political criteria: a twofold conclusion, twice true.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 158. Nel formare la favola non dobbiamo noi havere niuno riguardo a principio, a mezzo, o a fine dell' attione, con la quale si forma la favola, ma dobbiamo, propostaci una attione, o una particella d'una attione maggiore, diligentemente considerare, se è atta ad operare quello, che noi cerchiamo, ciò è, diletto negli uditori per narratione di caso fortunoso possibile ad avenire e non mai avenute.

2. Vide chap. vi.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 696. La quale ragione è che la tragedia opera quel diletto, che è più proprio dell' arte della poetica, che non fa l'epopea. E perchè il diletto è il fine della poesia, ma non ogni diletto, essendo quel diletto, che è suo proprio, al quale fine è più indirizzata la tragedia che l'epopea, seguita che la tragedia come membro della poesia più partefice di questo fine sia da antiporre all' epopea.

Scaliger and Minturno reject both. "The end of poetry is imitation, or its ulterior end, instruction";[1] for Scaliger has previously denied that imitation is an end in itself—"nulla imitatio propter se."[2] Pleasure may enter subsidiarily; "the end of poetry is to teach with delight."[3] These are Scaliger's. Minturno varies the phraseology; "the function of the poet is to teach, to delight and to move":[4] but it is still the same 'teaching with delight,' "dilettare e far profitto,"[5] with the addition of the rhetorician's persuasion. Moreover, both Scaliger and Minturno persistently arraign the creations of poetry before a purely moral tribune. Fracastoro is not so doubly in the dark, but he is equally blinded by the didactic heresy: to aim at pleasure is too mean for so divine an art as poesy—"multo dignior finis est perquirendus poetæ."[6] So he lays down, "the end of poetry is to delight and to teach by imitating things that are full at once of significance and beauty, in a style framed of fitting elements and beautiful in itself."[7] He saves himself somewhat, but only partially,

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 12. Finem id est, imitationem, sive ulteriorem finem, doctionem.

2. *Ibid*, p. 829.

3. *Ibid*, p. 831. Poetæ finem esse, docere cum delectatione.

4. *Arte Poetica*, p. 76. L'uficio del Poeta non è altro che dir talmente in versi, che insegni, e diletti, e muova.

5. *Ibid*, p. 170.

6. *Naugerius*, p. 330.

7. *Ibid*, p. 365. Dicimus poetæ finem esse delectare et prodesse imitando in unoque maxime et pulcherrima per genus dicendi simpliciter pulchrum ex convenientibus.

and even then, intermittently. Poetry is not a utilitarian art: that is something. Its teaching is not 'peritia rerum,' but 'cognitio rerum'; yet in this respect it is the perfection of utility—"poetam omnium utilissimum esse, et maxime prodesse"[1]—for in its form, as distinct from its matter, poetry provides a discipline in the beautiful. Tasso almost finds salvation in Aristotle, but Plato has too strong a hold on him. He denies that poetry, as poetry, has a didactic function; indeed, in one place, he denies it without limitation.[2] But he cannot separate the poet and the citizen in the judgment of their works: the poet is cumbered with the citizen's burden; "he ought to have much regard to teaching, if not in so far as he is poet (since teaching is not the end of poetry), yet, in so far as he is a citizen and a member of the state."[3] The result is that there is added on to poetry a moral function, "with the aim of teaching by delighting, that is, so that the delight may provide that one will read more willingly and so not miss the instruction."[4] The delight is thus the means, and not the end: and Tasso

1. *Naugerius*, p. 352.

2. *Opere*, xi. *Lezione all' accademia ferrarese*, p. 50. O perchè il diletto sia il suo fine, come io credo, o perchè sia mezzo necessario ad indurre il giovamento, come altri giudica.

3. *Ibid*, xii. *Discorsi dell' Arte Poetica*, p. 203. Dovendo il poeta aver molto riguardo al giovamento, se non in quanto egli è poeta (che ciò come poeta non ha per fine), almeno in quanto è uomo civile, e parte della reppublica.

4. *Ibid*, xii. *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 18. A fine di giovar dilettando, cioè, a fine che il diletto sia cagione ch'altri leggendo più volentiere, non escluda il giovamento.

ultimately defines poetry as "an imitation of human actions made for the direction of life." [1] In this respect, Castelvetro towers above his contemporaries: he never assigns a didactic function to poetry, and he never confuses the law of art with the laws of the state. Poetry is poetry for poetry's sake. Whether it is to be admitted into the state or not, is a political or moral, and hence unæsthetic, though necessary, consideration: that is, the state can grant its imprimatur to the poem or place it on the index, once it has been written; but it cannot prescribe the conditions for its production nor of its contents. The argument runs as follows. The art of politics is one thing, and the art of poetry another, different from the former entirely: hence a crime in the art of politics is not to be charged to the art of poetry at all. However politics, the art of governing the state, must be regarded as the supreme art; still this supremacy endows it merely with the right of veto against the other arts and not the right of directing them. [2] So, it is only the representation

1. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 13. La poesia è dunque imitazione delle azioni umane, fatta per ammaestramento della vita.

2. *P. d' A.*, p. 592. La dirittura del reggimento delle città consiste in rimuovere da loro il nocumento di fuori, e'l nocumento dentro, et in fare, che i cittadini habbiano di fuori pace, e dentro concordia, con tutte le cose necessarie alla vita lieta, costumata, e honorevole. Ma la dirittura della poetica consiste in rassomigliare con parole harmonizzate una attione humana possibile ad avenire, dilettevole per la novità dell' accidente. Anchora il fine del reggimento della città è diverso del fine della poetica; perciocchè il fine del reggimento della città riguarda al vivere concordevole insieme per maggiore agio e utile del corpo e dell' animo, e'l fine della poetica riguarda il diletto simplice, e la ricreatione degli ascoltanti. Non niego perciò, che la poetica non sia arte, che sia sottor-

or the recitation of a work of art which has already been produced independently, which the magistrate may forbid. The rest is a subject solely for the poet and for poetic criteria.

The aim of poetry is pleasure; but, says Castelvetro, the pleasure of a certain class of people, the ' moltitudine rozza.' The argument is twofold, with an initial prop on appeal to the supposed opinion of Aristotle: "for in the Poetics, Aristotle only intended treating of that poetry which was read or performed in the city squares for the delight of the people, such as was tragedy, comedy and epic." [1] The feature which these three forms of poetry have in common in this classification, may appear strange in the altered conditions of our own days and with our

dinata al reggimento publico della città, come ad arte principale, alla quale ne sono sottordinate insieme con la poetica molte altre. Poi che altra è la dirittura dell' arte cittadinesca, e altra è la dirittura della poetica, e poi che la dirittura di niuna altra arte non è quella della poetica, è assai cosa ragionevole che il peccato commesso nella dirittura dell'arte cittadinesca, o d'alcuna dell'altre arti, non si debba imputare alla poetica. Si come dall'altra parte, non si dovrebbe il peccato commesso nella dirittura della poetica imputare ad alcuna dell'altre arti. Ma non dimeno in quanto l'arte poetica è sottordinata all'arte del reggimento cittadinesca, et è adoperata da lei, i peccati della poetica s'imputano al predetto reggimento. Laonde i magistrati publici della città si prendono cura, che non si rappresentino tragedie o comedie, o non si recitino epopee, le quali non solamente per dishonestà, o per altro possano corrompere i santi e severi costumi, o sieno ingiuriose, ma non habbiano anchora quella dirittura dell' arte poetica, che loro si conviene per ottenere il proposto fine.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 76. Aristotele non intendeva in questo libro trattare d'altra poesia, che di quella, che s'essercitava in diletto del popolo in piazza, che era la tragedia, la comedia, e l'epopea.

facilities for obtaining printed books: it must have appeared somewhat strange, too, in Castelvetro's days. The matter is not negligible, for Castelvetro builds many elements of his theory on a consideration of the means of representation or of reading: and so throughout, he regards the epic as a "form of poetry recited in public places for public delight,"[1] thus bringing the epic into line with drama, and thus being able to give his conclusions a universal validity in poetry.

On the one hand, poetry owes its original being to its capacity for giving this pleasure to the general people; "poesy was founded for the delight of the ignorant mob and of the common people, and not for the delight of the learned."[2] On the other hand, tragedy, comedy, and epic, being performed or recited in public, are necessarily an appeal to a promiscuous crowd: "as they are, or can be performed publicly, it follows of necessity that they must have the common people for spectators and listeners."[3]

In this point, again, Castelvetro is unique, not only in his age but in all time. "Plato disapproved of that poetry which was meant for the pleasure of the mob,"[4] says Minturno; and in

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 534. . . . . Epopea, che si recita in piazza per diletto del popolo.

2. *Ibid*, p. 679. La poesia fu trovata per diletto della moltitudine ignorante, e del popolo commune, e non per diletto degli scientiati.

3. *Ibid*, p. 22. Se adunque montano o possono montare in palco, seguita di necessità, che habbiano il commune popolo per veditore e per ascoltatore.

4. *De Poeta*, p. 61. Poesim improbat Plato ad plebis voluptatem repertam.

the Laws he condemned music for the very reason that it seeks to please the masses.[1] Aristotle, too, denied that artistic pleasure was merely popular recreation. According to Pythagoras, Rymer informs us, for the wise alone was poetry ordained. To our Shakespeare the censure of the one judicious outweighed a whole theatre of others. The Renaissance was preponderantly in favour of the more aristocratic view, distorted, too, through the pedant's spectacles: the notion of an appeal to the general mass of people was defended by some of the more enlightened humanists like Lorenzo de' Medici [2] and Cardinal Bembo in their pleas for the vulgar tongue, but in the main, as literary critics, humanists would have said with Petrarch, "Vulgi enim laus apud doctos infamia est." Scaliger and Minturno, at all events, are unconditionally of Petrarch's view. Tasso takes a middle course, with a passport of Ciceronian signature. The mob cannot appreciate the perfect idea of beauty and of art, "it usually regards the accidental qualities more intently than the essence of things": [3] nevertheless the poet must consider the multitude, for the appeal to the

1. Plato, *Laws*, 11, 659, A—C.

2. Cf. *Commento di Lorenzo de' Medici sopra alcuni de' suoi sonetti*. Venice, 1554, p. 117 ff. Alcuna cosa non essere manco degna, per essere più commune: anzi ci prova, ogni bene esser tanto migliore, quanto è più communicabile et universale, come è di natura sua quello, che si chiama sommo bene: perchè non sarebbe sommo se non fusse infinito: nè alcuna cosa si può chiamere infinita, se non quella, che è commune a tutte le cose. Et però non pare che lo essere commune a tutta Italia la nostra lingua, le tolga dignità. (Quoted by Villey, *op. cit.*, p. xviii.)

3. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 87. Il vulgo suol più rimirare gli accidenti, che la sostanza delle cose.

learned and the wise, much as Tasso himself admires it, is not politic, "as it is only by the universal consensus of all manners of men that the poet acquires eternal glory." [1] "The poet then must speak not to the learned only but to the general people: so his thoughts and images must be adapted to their intelligence." [2] But, unlike Castelvetro, Tasso will not submit poetry entirely to what is often the mere whim of a mob: "let it ennoble its raw material making its old thoughts and images new, its vulgar ones noble, its general ones individual."[2]

1. *Opere*, xi, *Lezione nell' accademia ferrarese*, p. 49. Io per me come che sommamente ammiri la dottrina e l'altezza d'ingegno di Guido Cavalcanti, e di Dante in particolare . . . . . non dimeno stimo che la strada tenuta da loro, siccome è più nova, e men calcata dell'altre, così non sia quella, che ci conduce a quell'eterna gloria, che dal consenso universale di tutti gli uomini, e di tutti i secoli, alli eccellenti poeti è apparecchiata.

2. *Ibid*, pp. 50–51. Buon poeta non è colui, che non diletta, nè dilettare si può con quei concetti che recano seco difficoltà ed oscurità. Perchè necessario è che l'uomo affatichi la mente intorno all'intelligenza di quelli: ed essendo la fatica contraria alla natura degli uomini, ed al diletto, ove fatica si trovi, ivi per alcun modo non può diletto ritrovarsi. Parla il poeta non ai dotti solo, ma al popolo, come l'oratore; e però siano i suoi concetti popolari: popolari chiamo non quali il popolo gli usa ordinariamente, ma tali che al popolo siano intelligibili: ed è l'effetto dell'eloquenza, come dice Marco Tullio, l'applauso della moltitudine: e così come il pittore imita solamente le superficie delle cose, non esprimendo la profondità, che ciò non è proprio dell' arte sua, così dee il poeta, che è un pittore parlante, toccar solamente le superficie delle scienze: nè già è men difficile, o meno artificiosa questa maniera di scriver popolare, che quell'altra esatta e filosofica, perocchè molti fra la schiera degli scienziati si troveranno, che derivano da i fonti di Platone o di altri filosofi, alcun concetto, e quello con buone e scelte parole e con numeroso suono spiegheranno: ma chi sappia fare i concetti di vecchi nuovi, di volgari nobili, di communi proprij, molto è più malagevole che si ritrovi.

Castelvetro, however, went the whole way; and with salutary, because revolutionary, results in the main. Once again, the separation of science and the arts from poetry is insisted on: "for if the matter of sciences was allowed to be the subject of poetry, it would be evident, either that the end of poetry was not delight, or that its origin was not with the uncultured mob, but that its end was to teach and its origin was with scholars and men of learning: and this we know to be false."[1] Further, technical terms are not to be used in poetry; Dante is castigated for telling the time of the day in astronomical formulæ.[2] Nor is the poet to be the exponent of a particular philosophy, moral or natural, by "following the opinions of any of the sects of philosophers":[3] he introduces only those ideas of God which are current amongst the people, "for it behoves the poet to regulate his poem according to popular belief."[3] The rest, together with all arts and sciences, "has no place in poetry, which follows the opinion of the common people alone."[4]

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 30. Laonde se concedessimo che la materia delle scienze e dell'arti potesse essere soggetto della poesia, concederemmo anchora, che la poesia o non fosse stata trovata per dilettare, o non fosse stata trovata per le genti grosse, ma per insegnare e per le persone assotigliate nelle lettere e nelle disputi: il che anchora si conoscera essere falso.

2. *Ibid*, p. 30.

3. *Ibid*, p. 561. Aristotele in questa poetica non seguita l'opinioni delle sette di philosophi intorno alla credenza degl' iddij e dell'operationi loro, ma parla degl'iddij e dell' operationi loro secondo la credenza del popolo commune, secondo la quale dee regolare il poeta i suoi poemi.

4. *Ibid*, p. 36. . . . . la qual setta (degli stoici) non ha luogo nella poesia, che seguita il commune parere del popolo.

There is still one more consequence of Castelvetro's firm adherence to an æsthetic as opposed to a didactic function of poetry, which sets him high above his times. If the poet is a teacher, he must, like all teachers, possess encyclopædic knowledge. "Nothing of the more solid erudition is out of place in the temples of the Muses,"[1] says Scaliger, and he praises Vergil for his knowledge of the arts and sciences, navigatory, military and the rest. Minturno takes up the strain, "What science of so varied and obscure investigation is there, what study of so wonderful and recondite doctrine, of which Vergil has not scattered the principles and the seeds in his poems?"[2] Poetry is the reservoir of learning, as it is the fount of wisdom; "whatever of wisdom and knowledge thrives amongst men, all of it has been instituted by the poets, and especially by the epic poets."[3] Fracastoro, too, allows that the poet may teach all arts and all sciences; so Homer is said to be the first to have educated the Greeks.[4] True, he admits that it is not the poet, as poet, who is skilled in these things; it is

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 716. Nihil enim solidioris eruditionis a Musarum sacrariis alienum est.

2. *De Poeta*, p. 17. Jam vero quæ tam multiplicis obsuræque investigationis disciplina, quæ studia doctrinæ ita mirabilis et reconditæ, cujus non ille inter poemata quæ conscripsit, principia seminaque asperserit?

3. *Ibid*, p. 39. Atque idem contendo, si qua est inter homines sapientia, si qua perspicientia rerum viget, hanc totam esse a poetis, praesertim ab iis, quos epicos vocant, profectam.

4. *Naugerius*, p. 330. Propter quod et Homerus omnem Graeciam erudivisse primus dicitur.

as geographer, historian or arithmetician : nevertheless, the erudition is essential.

We know how these Renaissance critics set the fashion to later times. France echoed their doctrines, and she was particularly susceptible to the infection of pedantry. Voltaire wrote : "J'insisterai sur le grand précepte d'Horace, sapere est et principium et fons" : and again, what Voltaire wrote, France and the rest of Europe believed.

But Castelvetro will have none of this pedantry. "There have been many famous lettered men in times past, and there are many at present, who believe that the poet ought to be most intimately learned in every science and in every art, and that without this encyclopædic learning he cannot be a true poet. But Aristotle is against them : he believed that poetry could be praiseworthy and indeed perfect without the poet's having an exquisite or even a moderate knowledge of the sciences and the arts." [1] Castelvetro would prepare the way to Parnassus for a Burns.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 591. Hora sono stati molti ne' tempi passati, e sono molti anchora ne' tempi presenti forniti di molte lettere, e chiari per fama, li quali portano opinione, che il poeta debba essere ottimamente insegnato di tutte le scienze, e di tutte l'arti, e che senza piena conoscenza d'esse egli non possa essere veramente poeta. Dal parere de' quali, Aristotele, quanto possiamo ritrarre dalle parole scritte da lui, è molto lontano. Perciocchè, se egli vuole, che altra sia la dirittura della poetica, e altra la dirittura di ciascuna altra arte, et appresso vuole, che altro sia il torto, e'l peccato della poetica, e altro il torto, e'l peccato di ciascuna altra arte, e che perciò la poetica debba andare impunita de' peccati commessi nell'altre arti, seguita che egli credesse, che la poesia possa essere lodevole e perfetta senza la notitia isquisita o anchora mezzana delle scienze o dell'arti.

Pleasure is the end of poetry, the delight of the mob. On the psychological nature of this pleasure, Castelvetro has nothing illuminating to offer, like his English contemporary, Bacon's "submitting the show of things to the desires of the soul." But such as he has, is consonant with all the parts of his art of poetry, with the originality of the poet, the difficulty overcome, verisimilitude, and the 'moltitudine rozza.' He has already denied that æsthetic pleasure is one of recognition. It must arise, not mainly from the fable *per se*, but from its artistic treatment, 'per l'industria del poeta,'[1] an industry marked by originality and difficulties overcome. But both are legitimate. By its matter, "poetry delights by the novelty of incident,"[2] the pleasure being, thus, that of the marvellous. Despite an occasional use of the word 'miracoloso' in place of 'maraviglioso,' however, Castelvetro does not count the pleasure arising from the miraculous as legitimately æsthetic: for he distinctly bars out the miraculous from real poetry, in the interest of verisimilitude; "incredible things cannot arouse the pleasure the marvellous excites."[3] The marvel is, indeed, in the rigidity of adher-

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 512.

2. *Ibid*, p. 25. Hora il predetto soggetto ci diletta per la sua novità miracolosa, e non usitata, si come ci dilettano non pure tutte le cose miraculose, ma le prosopopee anchora.

3. *Ibid*, p. 612. Io dico che le cose incredibili non possono operare maraviglia. Cf. p. 336. . . . havendo Aristotele biasimate le solutioni delle difficultà, che si fanno per ordigno o per altra via miracolosa.

ence to the verisimilar, "lo stupore per cose verisimili."[1] And that brings us to the other aspect of the pleasure which the marvellous excites, viz., the one arising not from the fable *per se*, but from the 'industry of the artist.' Such is the poet's wonderful skill in ordonnance and in overcoming difficulties, that he takes away the breath of his readers, and leaves them in a state of stupor: "Homero ritiene in tanto diletto e stupore il lettore."[2] All these threads, then, meet in the theory that artistic pleasure, appealing to the mob, is a kind of awed suspense before such examples of the marvellous in matter, and such ingenuity in treatment. Particularly is this the case in tragedy, "for the state of marvel induced is the culmination of pity and fear."[3] And so the conclusion: "the end of poetry is delight, and the marvellous specially excites delight."[4] In another place he states the argument more fully: "if one should ask why the marvellous is necessary in tragedy, and to a greater extent in the epic, we reply that the end of poetry is pleasure, and that the marvellous excites pleasure: wherefore the marvellous is rationally requisite in tragedy and epic so that in these two species poetry may accomplish its particular

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 347.

2. *Ibid*, p. 513.

3. *Ibid*, p. 234. . . . . poi che la maraviglia è il colmo dello spavento e della compassione.

4. *Ibid*, p. 552. Il fine della poesia è il diletto, e la maraviglia spetialmente opera il diletto.

end."[1] It is well to note the form of the argument, for herein is the insufficiency. Poetry must give pleasure: the marvellous gives pleasure: therefore the marvellous must be embodied in poetry. Castelvetro did not enquire if the pleasure of the marvellous was the special pleasure which art was fitted to provide. Hence the fallacy.

The theory of the 'marvellous,' symptomatic of romantic art, is generally current in Renaissance criticism, with greater or lesser degrees of justification. "Who knows not that the end of poetry is a state of marvel?"[2] writes Minturno, and in the *De Poeta* he says that those plots which are the most miraculous are the most beautiful.[3] Scaliger, too, believes that a "poet's greatest virtue is his power of holding the reader in suspense up to the last word."[4] Tasso, too, makes place for the marvellous; "perhaps the special pleasure of the epic is that of the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 549. Poscia perchè altri poteva domandare per qual cagione si richiedesse la maraviglia nella tragedia e per proportione si richiedesse maggiore nell' epopea, si risponde che il fine della poesia, secondo che è stato detto, è il diletto, e che la maraviglia opera diletto: adunque la maraviglia non senza ragione si richiede nella tragedia e nell'epopea, acciocchè la poesia ottenga il debito fine suo in queste maniere di poesia.

2. *Arte Poetica*, p. 120. Ma chi non sa, il fine della Poesia esser la meraviglia?

3. *De Poeta*, p. 125. Quam ob rem quæ præter spem præterque opinionem, quæ Deorum voluntate, quæ fatali quadam sorte mirandum in modum ita obtingunt ut cohærere videantur, fabulas efficiunt pulchriores.

4. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 548. Maxima enim virtus hæc est poetæ, ut auditorem ad ultimum usque verbum suspensum teneat.

marvellous "[1]: but he does not accept it so fully in tragedy, pointing out—and it is an illuminating criticism of the whole theory—that the Greek tragedies could not have appealed primarily to the delight in the marvellous, " for they treated through all those years the same subjects, known familiarly throughout all Greece." [2]

1. *Opere,* xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico,* p. 18. Dee adunque ancora l'epopeja aver il suo proprio diletto colla sua propria operazione: e questa peravventura è il muover meraviglia.

2. *Ibid,* p. 18. . . . . li quali dopo tanti anni trattarono delle medesime cose già divulgate per la Grecia e fatte familiari a ciascuno.

CHAPTER VI.

The Drama and the Dramatic Unities.

Before proceeding to Castelvetro's theory of tragedy, it will be best to deal with those points which apply to drama in general. Drama is written to be acted; "the stage is a necessity for its perfection," [1] and "the opinion of Aristotle that as much delight can be had from a mere reading of tragedy as from a performance of it on the stage, is false." [2] "Tragedy cannot effect its proper function with a reading without staging and acting." [3] This is the radical principle of Castelvetro's theory of the dramatic art. Drama and epic are sharply separated at once: "in poetry there are possible two modes of representing action, viz., either by words and things, or by words alone; one of these modes is more similar to the thing represented, the other less; words and things together are the more similar mode, words alone the less; for in the former words are represented by words and things by things, whilst in the latter both words and things

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 298. . . . . la vista essendovi necessaria, se la tragedia dee havere la sua perfettione, la quale ella ha, quando è recitata in atto con la vista convenevole.

2. *Ibid*, p. 297. Aristotele è di questa opinione che quello diletto si tragga della tragedia in leggendola, che si fa in vedendola et in udendola recitare in atto; la qual cosa io reputo falsa.

3. *Ibid*, p. 687. Non è vero che la tragedia operi quello, che è suo proprio per la lettura senza la vista ei movimenti.

are represented by words alone." [1] Drama represents things by things, and words by words: the epic represents things and words by words alone. Castelvetro's way of stating the case is a foreboding of the rigour with which verisimilitude is to be screwed on to the drama. The result is the unities.

The premises are twofold. First, drama represents things by things, and words by words, and the things by which the representation is made, that is, the stage and its effects, are fixed in material, place, and time. Secondly, the audience in the theatre is human, subject to the bodily necessities of life, such as eating and drinking. The first premise, starting from the conditions of representation and developed according to the 'verisimile,' leads to the conclusion that "the time of the representation and that of the action represented must be exactly coincident," [2] and "that the scene of the action must be constant, being not merely restricted to one city or house, but indeed to that one place alone which could be visible to one person." [3] The second premise

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 16. La poesia usa due modi in rappresentare l'attione possibile, ciò è, parole e cose, o parole sole, l'uno de' quali modi è più simile alla cosa rappresentata, e l'altro meno: più simile modo sono le parole e cose, e meno simile modo le parole sole, ponendosi parole in luogo di parole e di cose in questo, là dove in quello si ponevano parole in luogo di parole, e cose in luogo di cose.

2. *Ibid*, p. 57. La rappresentativa spende tante hore in rappresentare le cose, quante si spendono in farle.

3. *Ibid*, p. 535. Nella tragedia lo spatio del luogo, per lo quale essa si mena a fine, è ristretto non solamente ad una città o villa o campagna o simile sito, ma anchora a quella vista che sola può apparere agli occhi d'una persona.

leads to a conclusion limiting the utmost extent of the time of action to twelve hours, "for people, owing to bodily needs, could not possibly remain in the theatre longer than that." [1] The summary conclusion is this: "tragedy ought to have for subject an action which happened in a very limited extent of place and in a very limited extent of time, that is, in that place and in that time, in which and for which the actors representing the action remain occupied in acting; and in no other place and in no other time." [2]

It is to be noted that no definite time is stipulated. Mr. Spingarn's choice of a quotation to illustrate Castelvetro's unities is unfortunate.[3] Castelvetro was not accepting a tradition, but was consistently working out a principle, namely, that the time and place of action and of representation should be exactly coincident. The fixed time of twelve hours is only mentioned as an extreme limit: "the time of action ought not to exceed the limit of twelve hours." [4] The unities

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 109. Così come il luogo stretto è il palco, così il tempo stretto è quello che i veditori possono a suo agio dimorare sedendo in theatro, il quale io non veggo che possa passare il giro del sole, si come dice Aristotele, ciò è, hore dodice, conciosia cosa che per le necessità del corpo, come è mangiare, bere, diporre i superflui pesi del ventre e della vesica, dormire e per altre necessità, non possa il popolo continuare oltre i predetto termino così fatta dimora in theatro.

2. *Ibid*, p. 109. La tragedia conviene havere per soggetto un'attione avenuta in picciolo spatio di luogo, et in picciolo spatio di tempo, ciò è, in quel luogo, et in quel tempo, dove e quando i rappresentatori dimorano occupati in operatione, e non altrove, nè in altro tempo.

3. *Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, p. 99.

4. *P. d' A.*, p. 163. . . . . non dee passare il termino di dodici hore, si come con Aristotele habbiamo altrove detto.

had become merely traditional dogma when they prescribed the inviolable dramatic time-table. But Castelvetro was no dramaturgical horologer working to a pedant's water-clock.

Such is the rationale of the unities of time and place, and the special form in which they were enunciated by Castelvetro: and so they entered literary criticism. Castelvetro had evolved them as an *a priori* theory, on premises drawn from his conception of the material conditions of dramatic representation. He is going a step further and approaching the matter from an entirely different standpoint, a psychological one, and the one in which the radical error lies, when he adds that the effect of a drama on its audience depends on its adherence to the unities: "there is no possibility," he says, "of making the spectators believe that many days and nights have passed, when they themselves obviously know that only a few hours have actually elapsed: they refuse to be so deceived." [1] It may also be noted here that Castelvetro thinks he sees the unity of time in Aristotle: he translates the relevant passage in the Poetics [2]—"tragedy makes every effort to

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 109. Nè è possibile a dargli ad intendere che sieno passati più dì e notti, quando essi sensibilmente sanno, che non sono passate se non poche hore, non potendo lo'nganno in loro havere luogo, il quale è tuttavia riconosciuto dal senso.

2. *Poetics*, v, 4. Butcher reads ἔτι δὲ τῷ μήκει, <ἐπεὶ> ἡ μὲν ὅτι μαλιστα πειρᾶται ὑπὸ μίαν περίοδον ἡλίου εἶναι ἢ μικρὸν ἐξαλλάττειν. Castelvetro reads the same, with the omission of ἐπεὶ and he translates—Tragedia si sforza, quanto può il più stare sotto un giro del sole, o di mutarne poco. (*P. d' A.*, p. 107.)

limit itself to one revolution of the sun or to exceed it little." But that this apparent authority is of no vital importance to Castelvetro may be seen from the fact that he accuses Aristotle of not knowing the true reason for this obligation. Of course, it is common knowledge now that Aristotle made no obligation at all of the unity of time.

Castelvetro based his theory of the unities of time and place on the conditions obtaining only in drama. Consequently, he does not apply it to the epic as a species : " the extent of the action of the epic is not determined, for the epic, narrating with words only, can recount without inconvenience an action which has happened in many years and in diverse places, since words present to our intellect things distant in time and place."[1] This is apparently contradicted by an instance of pedantic perversity : " as the length of that fable, which is presented both to the vision and the hearing, cannot exceed twelve hours, so the length of that fable presented to the hearing alone, cannot exceed the same limit of twelve hours."[2] But all Castelvetro means by this, is

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 109. Lo spatio dell'attione dell'epopea non è determinata, perciocchè l'epopea, narrando con parole sole, può raccontare una attione avenuta in molti anni et in diversi luoghi senza sconvenevolezza niuna, presentando le parole allo' ntelletto nostro le cose distanti di luogo e di tempo.

2. *Ibid*, p. 169. Hora si come la grandezza della favola, che si comprende con la vista e con l'udita, non può passare dodici hore, come è stato detto, così la grandezza della favola che si comprende per l'udita sola non può passare questo medesimo termino di dodici hore.

that the epic must be able to be read in twelve hours: so he continues, "and what sort of a man would he be who could read a poem longer than twelve hours on a stretch, or listen to it longer?"[1] Yet withal, if the epic is suitably divided into equal parts, he says, you can spend twelve hours reading one part one day, and other parts on following days till you get to the end eventually.

So far then, the epic is untrammelled by the unities: now, they enter, and in this wise. Though the epic is unlimited as a species in time and place, yet it is better as poetry when the unities of time and place are observed, because in that way the poet shows his superior skill in producing the marvellous from poverty of material and of scope: "it is more marvellous when a great mutation of a hero's fortune is made, in a very limited time and a very limited place, than when it is made in a longer time and in varied and larger places."[2] So the epic is shackled, too. "The more the time of action of the epic is restricted, the more praiseworthy it will be: the more the place is restricted, the more commendable it will be: and altogether the epic will be more beautiful."[3]

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 169. Et quale huomo sarebbe quello che potesse o leggere un poema più di dodici hore, o ascoltare?

2. *Ibid*, p. 534. Cosa più maravigliosa è, che si faccia una mutatione grandissima in contrario, in uno e poco tempo, et in uno e picciolo spatio di luogo, che si faccia in più e lunghi tempi, et in varii e larghi luoghi.

3. *Ibid*, p. 535. Quanto il tempo dell'attione nell'epopea sarà più ristretto, e di meno giorni, tanto sarà più lodevole: quanto il luogo è più stretto, tanto è più commendato, e fa riuscire l'epopea più bella.

To Aristotle, the principal, indeed, the only unity was the unity of action. Castelvetro reverses the order. Unity—or, at least, restriction—of action is no more than an inevitable consequence of the unities of time and place. "It was Aristotle's opinion that the plot of tragedy and comedy ought to comprise one action only, or two whose interdependence makes them one, and ought rather to concern one person than a race of people. But he ought to have justified this, not by the fact that a plot is incapable of comprising more actions, but by the fact that the extreme temporal limit of twelve hours and the restriction of the place for the performance, do not permit a multitude of actions nor the action of a whole race, nor indeed do they permit the whole of one complete action, if it is of any length: and this is the principal reason and the necessary one for the unity of action, that is, for the limitation of the plot to but one action of one person, or two actions which by their interdependence can be counted one." [1] On no account does Castelvetro favour the strict unity of action.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 179. Ma Aristotele si poteva bene avedere, che nella tragedia e nella comedia la favola contiene una attione sola, o due, le quali per dipendenza possono essere riputate una, e più tosto d'una persona, che d'una gente, non perchè la favola non sia atta a contenere più attioni, ma perchè lo spatio del tempo al più di dodici hore, nel quale si rappresenta l'attione, e la strettezza del luogo, nel quale si rappresenta l'attione, non permettono moltitudine d'attioni, o pure attione d'una genta, anzi bene spesso, non permettono tutta una attione intera, se l'attione è alquanto lunga. E questa è la ragione principale e necessaria perchè la favola della tragedia e della comedia dee esser una, ciò è, contenere una attione sola d'una persona, o due stimate una per la dipendenza.

A narrower one may be necessary in drama than in the epic, owing to the limitation due to dramatic conditions; but even in drama, there must be at least two actions: "no drama can be praiseworthy, which has not two actions, that is, two plots, though one is principal and the other accessory." [1] For multitude of action pleases more than singleness, and pleasure is the end of poetry: "there is no doubt that there is more pleasure in listening to a plot containing many and diverse actions than in listening to that which contains but one." [2] Unlike drama, the epic is not limited by material conditions; "it can recount not only one action, but many and much longer ones, which, moreover, have happened in different lands." [3] Hence, in the epic let there be multitude of action. Poets who write a Heracleid or a Theseid are not to be blamed: "since history in one tale gives accounts of the many actions of one person, so can poetry, without blame, in one plot; so also, since history with great applause, can narrate one action of a

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 692. Ma ci dobbiamo ricordare, che habbiamo mostrato, che non si può far tragedia o comedia, che sia lodevole, la quale non habbia due attioni, ciò è, due favole, quantunque l'una sia principale, e l'altra accessoria.

2. *Ibid*, p. 504. Ma perchè il più e la diversità delle cose piacenti generano maggiore diletto, che non fa la singolarità e la conformità d'una cosa piacente, non ha dubbio, che maggiore si trarra di vedere più e diversi animali piacenti, che non si trahe di vederne uno: e similmente non ha dubbio, che non si tragga maggiore diletto ascoltandi una favola contenente più e diverse attioni, che quella, che ne contiene una sola.

3. *Ibid*, p. 179. . . . . la quale può raccontare non pure una attione, ma più, e lunghissime e avenute in diversi paesi.

whole race of people, can poetry do this; and not only can poetry narrate one action of a whole race, it can narrate many actions of a whole race; and, furthermore, I fail to see how poetry could be blamed, if it were allowed to narrate many actions of many persons or of many races." [1]

But as in the case of the unities of time and place, the ' difficulty overcome ' is introduced as an incentive to a strict adherence to a unity of action. Thus, the unity of action is not an inherent necessity, but merely a demonstration of the skill of the poet : " singleness of plot is not in the least introduced on account of its necessity, but on account of the poet's eagerness for glory and to demonstrate the excellence and the singularity of his genius;" [2] " for the judgment and the industry of the poet is demonstrated, when with a plot comprising but a single action of a single person, that is, with a plot apparently without any promise of success in it, he nevertheless furnishes the spectators with as much delight as other poets can scarcely do with plots com-

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 178. Perchè non ha dubbio niuno, che se nell' historia si narra sotto un raccontamento più attioni, d'una persona sola, nella poesia si potra sotto una favola narrare senza biasimo più attioni d'una persona sola. Si come parimente nella poesia senza biasimo si potra narrare una attione sola d'una gente, perciocchè l'historia fa ciò con molta lode. E non solamente pure nella poesia si potra narrare una attione d'una gente, ma anchora più attioni d'una gente. E si lei si concederà la narratione di molte attioni di molte persone, o di molte genti, non però veggo che biasimo alcuno le debba seguirà.

2. *Ibid*, p. 504. Ma la predetta singolarità della favola non è miga stata introdotta per necessità, ma per vaghezza di gloria del poeta e per dimostrare l'eccellenza e la singolarità dello'ngegno.

prising many actions of many persons." [1] Hence, Castelvetro's enunciation of the unity of action: "the plot of drama should necessarily comprise one action of one person, or two interdependent on each other; and the plot of the epic ought to comprise one action of one person, not through necessity, but for a demonstration of the excellence of the poet." [2]

Castelvetro was the first to formulate the unities of time and place definitely. Minturno talks of a unity of time, or rather he babbles of a time limitation; for here, as elsewhere, he has no theory: "I hold that tragedy has to end in one day or not to exceed the space of two," [3] firstly, because he believed Aristotle said so, and, secondly, "because ancient tragedy did so." [4] This is most typical of Minturno. For similar reasons he would impose on the epic a time limitation of one year: "in the larger and longer epic, the ancients limited themselves to a time of one year."

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 179. In narrare una attione sola d'una persona, che in prima vista non pare haver potere di ritenere gli animi ad ascoltare con diletto, si scopre il giudicio, e la'ndustria del poeta, operando quello con una attione d'una persona, che altri apena possono operare con molte attioni e di molte persone.

2. *Ibid*, p. 179. Laonde è da conchiudere, che la favola della tragedia e della comedia per necessità dee contenere una attione d'una persona, o due dipendendo l'una dall'altra, e la favola dell'epopea dee contenere una attione d'una persona non per necessità, ma per dimostratione dell'eccellenza del poeta.

3. *Arte Poetica*, p. 117. E da tenere che tragedie s'abbiano a terminare in un dì, o non trapassino lo spazio di due.

4. *Ibid*, p. 71. Chi ben mirerà nell'opere de' più pregiati autori antichi, troverà che la materia delle cose addotte nella

There is no allusion to a unity of place in Minturno. In Scaliger there does not seem to be any direct statement of the unities of time and place at all: but there are at least two references to them. Advising a young poet how to write a tragedy on the subject of Ceyx, he says: "Do not start from Ceyx's going aboard; for the time your tragedy can occupy is six or eight hours at most, and it is not verisimilar that in so little time a tempest should arise and that the ship should be destroyed in a tract of the sea from which there is no sight of land." [1] In another place he says: "I cannot bring myself to approve when I find in the Captivi that Philocrates goes to Aulis, and Philopolemus returns from Ætolia to Aulis in such very short time. No less blameable are the Greek tragic dramatists, one of whom makes Theseus march—and that with his army—from Athens to Thebes, fight a battle, and report his victory by a messenger, and all in a very few minutes." [2] These quotations adumbrate a unity

scena in un dì si termina, o non trapassa lo spazio di due giorni: si come dell' Epica più grande e più lunga s'è detto che non sia più di un'anno.

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 335. Ex qua fabula, si Tragœdiam contexes, neutiquam a digressu Ceycis incipito: quum enim Scenicum negotium totum sex octove horis peragatur. Haud verisimile est et ortam tempestatem, et obrutam navem eo in maris tractu, unde terræ conspectus nullus.

2. *Ibid*, p. 708. Itaque ne illud quidem unquum est a me probatum, cum in Captivis et abit Philocrates et redit Philopolemus ab Aetolis Aulidem perpauxillis horis. Non minore culpa tragici Græci, apud quos Athenis Thebas Theseus momento temporis, etiam cum exercitu, etiam præliam fit, etiam post victoriam nuncius.

of time based on verisimilitude: but Scaliger has little logical tenacity, and formulates no theory. Unity of place is not alluded to: for in the former quotation the implied change of scene from land to sea is only objected to on account of the time taken in the journey. Like Castelvetro, Tasso would prescribe no unity of time for the epic; and on the broader question of the unity of action, the part he played in his controversy with Ariosto marks him as an upholder of a sanely understood acceptance of Aristotle's dictum.

CHAPTER VII.

Tragedy.

Castelvetro bases his theory of tragedy on Aristotle's definition,[1] which he translates as follows: "Tragedy is an imitation of an action, magnificent, complete, which has magnitude, and comprises each of those species, which represent with speech made delightful separately in its parts, and not by narration, and, moreover, induces through pity and fear, the purgation of such passions." [2] This he modifies, however, in one essential point. The purgation is to him a moral and an unæsthetic question; the end of tragedy is "the excitement of pity and fear," [3] and the question of their purgation is æsthetically irrelevant. Further, "pity and fear being the

1. *Poetics*, vi, 2. *ἔστιν οὖν τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας καὶ τελείας μεγεθος ἐχούσης, ἡδυσμένῳ λόγῳ χωρὶς ἑκάστῳ τῶν εἰδῶν ἐν τοῖς μορίοις, δρώντων καὶ οὐ δι' ἀπαγγελίας, δι' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν.*

2. *P. d' A.*, p. 113. E dunque tragedia rassomiglianza d'attione magnifica, compiuta, che habbia grandezza, di ciascuna delle spetie di coloro che rappresentano con favella fatta dilettevole separatamente per particelle, e non per narratione, e oltre a ciò, induca per misericordia e per ispavento purgatione di così fatte passioni.

3. *Ibid*, p. 35. . . . . di metter compassione o spavento negli animi de' veditori o degli ascoltatori.

end of tragedy,"[1] any dramatic species which excites these emotions is tragedy. True, the pity and fear may be aroused in varying degrees, but the lesser as well as the greater is tragic, and is to be admitted into the tragic species; for, unlike Aristotle, Castelvetro is not primarily seeking the ideal tragedy, but is preparing a text-book for the composition of tragedies, the ideal being one amongst many. Hence, Aristotle is accused of being too restrictive. Talking of one particular kind of plot which the Greek philosopher had rejected, Castelvetro says: "Aristotle ought not to have said that this instance does not contain the tragic, but he ought to have said that it does not contain it to the same degree":[2] for, to Castelvetro, a drama has sufficient claim to the name of tragedy, if in its course pity and fear are aroused, independent of the nature of the dénouement. The dénouement is not the essential difference between tragic and comic art. "Tragedy can have either a happy or a sorrowful ending, as can comedy; but the joy or the sorrow of the tragic ending is different from the joy or the sorrow of the comic ending. The joyful dénouement of tragedy is formed by the cessation to the hero or to one dear to him, of impending death or sorrowful life or threatened loss of kingship: and the sorrowful dénouement is formed by the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 35. . . . . e spavento e compassione, le quali due sono il fine della tragedia.

2. *Ibid*, p. 315. Adunque Aristotele non doveva dire che questo caso non havesse cosa tragica, ma che haveva meno quantità di cosa tragica che non havevano gli altri.

occurrence of these things. The happy dénouement of comedy is formed by the removal of insult from the hero or from one dear to him, or by the cessation of a long-standing shame, or by the recovery of an esteemed person or possession which was lost, or by the fulfilment of his love: and the sorrowful dénouement of comedy is formed by the occurrence of the opposite of these things." [1]

The happy ending, then, has place in tragedy, when terrible forebodings are finally averted. Castelvetro knows that this is consonant with one sentence of Aristotle's Poetics: [2] but he points out Aristotle's 'inconsistency.' For the Greek philosopher had demanded that the tragic plot should involve πάθος 'calamity,' which he defined

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 221. Il fine della tragedia è letitia o tristitia, ma non ogni letitia o tristitia, acciocchè non si confonda la letitia e la tristitia finali della tragedia con la letitia o con la tristitia, le quali sono fine della comedia. La letitia adunque finale della tragedia consiste e si ristringe nel cessamento a se o a persone care, della morte, o della vita dolorosa, o della perdita dello stato reale; si come dall' altra parte, la tristitia consiste e si ristringe nell' avenimento a se o a persone care della morte, o della vita dolorosa, o della perdita dello stato reale. E questi due sono i suoi fini propri. Il fine della comedia è similmente letitia o tristitia, ma non quella medesima tristitia che dicemmo essere della tragedia. Conciosia cosa che la letitia, la quale è il fine della comedia consiste nel ricoprimento d'alcuno scorno fatto a se, o a persone care, o nel cessamento d'alcuna vergogna, che altri non credeva potere cessare, o nel ricoveramento di persona o di cosa cara perduta, o nell' adempimento di disiderio amoroso. Ma la tristitia consiste e si ristringe nel ricevimento in se, o in persone care, d'alcuno scorno o vergogna mezzana, o nel danno di roba non molto grave, o nello'mpedimento di godere la persona amata, et in cotali cose.

2. *Poetics*, xiv, 9. "The last case is the best, as when in the Cresphontes Merope is about to slay her son, but, recognising who he is, spares his life." (Butcher.)

as an action destructive or sorrowful.[1] But, says Castelvetro, this would cut out the happy ending entirely: the Cresphontes could not be the best tragedy in such conditions. So Castelvetro suggests a 'fuller' definition of πάθος; "an action destructive or sorrowful, either which actually happens, or which is impending":[2] for only when the calamity is and remains a threat, is the happy ending possible, and this possibility is necessary according to Castelvetro's theory of tragedy. But he thought experience was against him: the truth is that this reference to experience is accompanied by a shifting of the point of view, from the search for the tragic to the search for the ideal tragedy. But the confusion was unconsciously made; and to Castelvetro's great credit, he was willing to lay his theories on one side and be inconsistent. "Tragedy without the sad ending cannot excite and does not excite, as experience shows, either fear or pity."[3] So Castelvetro explains the happy ending of many tragedies by the fact of their being written to please the common people; a fault which in the sum total of Castelvetro's theory is its own justification, which justification, however, is not urged here, again to the critic's credit.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 254. Difinisce Passione essere attione corrutiva o dolorosa.

2. *Ibid*, p. 254. Pon mente che la diffinitione poteva essere più piena, se havesse detto passione corrutiva o dolorosa, che fosse avenuta, o fosse in su l'avenire.

3. *Ibid*, p. 290. Anzi nella tragedia senza il fine tristo, non si può ragionevolmente generare, nè si genera, secondo che mostra l'esperienza, spavento nè compassione.

And a further point. Be the ending happy or sad, it is no arbitrary choice, but an inevitable climax of the inherent probability of the fable itself: the dénouement must not be impeded by human aid from without, nor by divine aid;[1] "the solution of the plot ought to be brought about by the plot itself, *i.e.*, the striking of the danger and the ceasing of the difficulty should themselves be constituents of the plot following the nature of the danger and of the difficulty by necessity or by verisimilitude."[2]

Minturno and Scaliger also set forth the Aristotelian definition of tragedy, with an addition in each case extremely typical of the authors. Minturno adds, at the end of his version of Aristotle's definition, "so that pity and fear are aroused to purge the mind of similar passions for its delight and profit."[3] Horace had struck hard. Scaliger's comment is yet more typical: after quoting Aristotle's definition in Greek, he adds,

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 310. Non bella sarà quella favola, quando l'essecutione del fatto è impedita per l'aiuto humano sopravegnente di fuori, o per divino aiuto.

2. *Ibid*, p. 332. Adunque è cosa manifesta, che le solutioni delle favole deono avenire per la favola stessa, ciò è, che l'uscite de'pericoli, e che i cessamenti delle difficolta sopravenute nelle favole, deono avenire per mezzo delle cose della favola, che di necessità o di verisimilitudine seguitino dopo i pericoli o le difficoltà.

3. *Arte Poetica*, p. 75. Tragedia è imitazione di cose gravi e notabili sotto una materia intera e perfetta, e di certa grandezza comprese: la qual si fa con suave parlare, e talmente, che le parti di lei ordinatamente si pongano, e ciascun' abbia il suo luogo; nè semplicemente narrando, ma introducendo in atti, e in parole altrui sì, che se ne desti pietà e spavento a purgar l'animo di simili passioni con diletto e profitto di lui.

with infinite conceit, " which definition I will not attack otherwise than by adding my own : 'imitatio per actiones illustris fortunæ, exitu infelici, oratione gravi metrica.'"[1] It will be seen that Scaliger will have no 'happy' ending for tragedy —" exitus horribiles."[2] Minturno's most docile dependence, however, leads him into the same inconsistency as is found in Aristotle; that is, if in despite of Lessing, we are to call it an inconsistency.

1. *Poetices Libri Septem.*, p. 26. Quam nolo hic impugnare aliter quam nostram subnectendo.
2. *Ibid*, p. 25.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Tragic Hero.

Tragedy, being poetry, is no portrait gallery. The plot is the principal thing, and, in the phrase adopted from Aristotle, is "as the soul of poetry."[1] Action is the first consideration, "for tragedy is not imitative of men, but of actions."[2] By action, we have seen, Castelvetro means more than the outward act alone: "the plot is the constitution of the things, *i.e.*, the invention of the things or the subject: which invention or subject comprises the invention of the visible things and the invention of the invisible things."[3] That is, the inward action of human will and mind is also a field of poetic imitation. And here is the material of character.

Castelvetro puts it a little differently. All human action is a disclosure of character; "in most actions, men do not hide their characters,

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 9. Aristotele fa in questa propositione spetial memoria della favola tra tutte le parte di qualità di poesia, non solamente, perchè entra in tutte le poesie, le quali senza lei non possono havere l'essere, et è la principale, e come anima della poesia, ma anchora, perchè la constitutione sua è propria di questa arte, e non propria di niuna altra.

2. *Ibid*, p. 114. . . . . conciosia cosa che la tragedia non sia rassomigliatrice degli huomini, ma dell'attioni.

3. *Supra*, p. 56, note 2.

but exhibit them." [1] Hence, if the actions are to be imitated in full verisimility, character must also be imitated: "poets who make tragedies without character and thought, do not really imitate human action; for in the operation of human action, character and thought are always revealed, though sometimes more, sometimes less." [2] And so, says Castelvetro, Aristotle was wrong when he held that there could be tragedy without character:[3] "I fail to see how there could be a good tragedy without character." [4] Yet character is secondary to action, coming in only in its train: "drama does not imitate men in action to discover their characters," [5] for in poetry character cannot be an end in itself. "If the plot is the end of tragedy and of all poetry, if it is not a thing accessory to character, but on the contrary, character is accessory to the plot, then many authors of great fame, ancient and modern, including Julius Cæsar Scaliger, have gravely erred in their opinion that it was the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 145. Ma nell' avenimento vero di simili attioni gli huomini operantili non nascondono i loro costumi, ma gli palesano.

2. *Ibid*, p. 125. Hora l'attioni degli huomini procedono da due cagioni, che sono costumi e sententia. Ma que'poeti, li quali fanno le tragedie senza costumi e senza sententia, non rassomigliano bene attione humana, nell'operatione della quale si scoprono sempre i costumi e la sententia, benchè alcuna volta più, e alcuna volta meno.

3. *Poetics*, vi, ii.

4. *P. d' A.*, p. 322. Nè veggo come la tragedia possa essere senza costumi, che stia bene.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 35. Nè è vero che gli huomini rassomiglianti rassomiglino gli huomini occupati in attione per iscoprire i costumi.

intention of good poets like Homer and Vergil to depict and demonstrate to the world, let us say, an indignant captain as excellently as possible, a valiant soldier, a wise man, and their moral natures; with much more of the same twaddle: for if this were true, then character would not be, as Aristotle says, secondary to action, but action would be secondary to character. Moreover, such subject could not be really poetic: it is much rather philosophic."[1] The word Castelvetro here applies to the opinions of Scaliger, '*cancie*,' 'twaddle,' is not too severe, when one remembers the treatment character received at the hands of Scaliger, Minturno, and the whole host of Renaissance critics. There are chapters and chapters in which the critic distributes character-prescriptions, "how a man is angry," "how half angry," etc.: and Scaliger praises Statius

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 140. Se la favola è il fine della tragedia, e per conseguente d'ogni maniera di poema, conciosia cosa che la favola tenga quel medesimo luogo in qualunque altro poema, che tienne nella tragedia, ciò è, il finale, e non sia cosa accessoria a costumi, ma per lo contrario i costumi non tengono il luogo finale e sono cosa accessoria alla favola, seguita che molti autori di gran grido di lettere degli antichi, e de' moderni, tra quali è anchora Giulio Cesare dalla Scala, o Scaligero, habbiano gravamente errato, li quali vogliono, che l'intentione de' buoni poeti, come d'Homero, e di Virgilio nelle loro più famose opere, quali sono l'Iliada e l'Odissea, e'l Eneida, sia stata di dipingere e di dimostrare al mondo, pogniamo, un capitano sdegnato, nella più eccellente maniera che sia possibile, o un valoroso conduttiere, o un savio huomo, e la natura loro, e simili cancie, conciosia cosa che, se questo fosse vero, i costumi non sarebbono stati presi da poeti per secondare l'attione, come dice Aristotele, ma l'attione sarebbe stata presa per secondare i costumi. Senza che non s'aveggono che, se simile materia fosse principale e non accessoria, non potrebbe essere materia poetica, essendo naturalmente philosophica e trattata da molti philosophi.

for ability in such 'distribution,'[1] the idea being that character in poetry is a prescribed norm, a decorum reduced to its lowest terms. It is interesting to read the prescription for the composition of Englishmen—"Angli, perfidi, inflati, feri, contemptores, stolidi, amentes, inertes, inhospitales, immanes."[2]

Castelvetro has none of these inanities. The true relationship of action and character, he says, Aristotle has pointed out; "character comes in because persons come in in action; but persons are not introduced in action because a display of character is required."[3] And so he concludes—and this is going further than Aristotle had gone—"Though character is not a part of the action, yet it accompanies it inseparably, being revealed together with the action: hence character ought not to be considered as a part separate from the action, for without it the action would not be performed."[4]

Tragedy, then, has its being in the plot, and the constitution of the plot involves a portrayal of character. But this portrayal has not a moral aim, nor, indeed, ethical as it is in substance, is it

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 778. . . . . officiorum, habitudinum, animorum prudentior distributor.

2. *Ibid*, p. 234.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 343. . . . . il quale disse, che i costumi si prendevano per rispetto delle persone operanti, e non le persone operanti per rispetto de' costumi.

4. *Ibid*, p. 145. Adunque i costumi, avegna che non sieno parte dell'attione, ma compagnia inseparabile, e scoprentise insieme con l'attione, non si deono potere giudicare essere parte separata dall'attione, poi che senza essi non si fa l' attione.

to be regarded from an ethical standpoint. Its criteria must be æsthetic: it must be judged only in its relation to the achievement of a purely æsthetic end. "In questions of constituting the species of poetry, no account at all should be taken of goodness or badness, extreme or moderate: these things should be considered only in so far as the aim is to arouse pity and fear in the minds of the audience":[1] that is, ethical truth is of account to the artist only in respect of its æsthetic potentiality, its capacity, in this instance, for arousing pity and fear. But Castelvetro goes a still further step. Ethical truth is of no account to the artist: the absolute good and the absolute bad as moral realities, and the substance of a Stoical ethical philosophy, have no æsthetic significance to an audience composed of the uncultured mob. What is essential is a certain 'nobility,' a mode of goodness or of badness, unmoral to this extent that its ethical import is of no immediate consideration; sufficient for the stage is that it is an appearance and serves artistic ends: "when Aristotle spoke of the 'better' people, in respect of their goodness, and of the 'worse' people, in respect of their badness, he was accommodating himself too much to the Stoics, who call 'noble' only what is virtuous, 'vile' only what is vicious. But the Stoic creed has no place in poetry, which follows the popular

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 35. Adunque della bontà o della malvagità soprana o mezzana, non si dee tener conto niuno in poesia per constituire spetie di poesia, ma sene dee tener conto in quanto intendiamo di metter compassione o spavento negli animi de' veditori o degli ascoltatori.

opinion, according to which there is nobility in good and bad, and vileness also." [1] From this point of view, Castelvetro sets out to define the character of the tragic hero.

Above all, the hero of tragedy must bear the impress of nobility. We have noble men and noblemen with us to-day: and Castelvetro endows his hero primarily with the external marks of the latter nobility—the social élite. He must be resplendent in all the accoutrements of gentility, as a sign to the populace of his lofty position. "It appears that, as far as the subject of poetry is concerned, nobility or vileness constitute the difference: which nobility or vileness is not to be discerned by goodness or by badness, but by bearing and address: a good deportment is a sign of nobility, an awkward one, of vileness. And by deportment I mean those things which witness not to the moral character but to the courtliness or the boorishness of the hero." [2]

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 36. Per vero dire, Aristotele, havendo nominati i migliori havendo rispetto alla bontà dell'animo, ei peggiori alla malvagità, s'è accostato troppo agli stoici, li quali non reputano nobile, se non il virtuoso, e vile, se non il vitioso. La qual setta non ha luogo nella poesia, che seguita il commune parere del popolo, secondo il quale sono de' nobili buoni e malvagi, e parimente de' vili, buoni e malvagi.

2. *Ibid*, p. 36. Adunque appare che la nobilità e la viltà constituiscono la differenza della poesia per cagione della materia. La qual nobiltà e viltà non si discerne per bontà o per malvagità, ma si discerne per portamenti, i quali portamenti, se sono informati di convenevolezza scoprono la nobiltà. e se sono informati di sconvenevolezza scoprono la viltà. E per convenevolezza e sconvenevolezza io intendo modi e costumi, che non testimonino della bontà o della malvagità dell'animo dell'operante, ma facciano fede della gentilezza o della rusticità dell'operante, e procedono dallo'ngegno, ciò è, dall'accorgimento o dalla sciocchezza.

Best of all is a hero of the highest rank—a king. One step further and rank is the distinguishing mark between tragedy and comedy : so Castelvetro asserts " that the royal state and the private state are the considerations which divide poetry into its species." [1] This position he holds to the full, even going so far as to say that a drama in which a man of private rank is raised within the course of the drama, to that of royalty, should be called a tragedy under all circumstances :[2] for its hero becomes a king.

But Castelvetro does not always lay stress on nobility in this purely external sense. It carries with it an implication of an inner nobility, much like Corneille's " grandeur d'âme bien exprimé," a nobility which involves a mighty spirit implacable beyond all human reconciliation, irrevocably committed to the issue, and borne in fury of soul above the pleasures and pains of the ordinary mortal, to destruction or triumph in a grandeur in and for themselves. And this type of character Castelvetro again finds only amongst the royal state, for kings alone possess the sphere of its fruition : and in this again tragedy is distinguished from comedy. The heroes of tragedy are royal and have grander spirits than those of comedy, are more lofty, are ardent in their desires : if they are insulted or threatened with insult, they do not run to the magistrates with complaints, nor do they bear the injury patiently ;

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 36. Lo stato reale, e'l privato, le quali due sole parti partono e separano la poesia e la dividono in ispetie.
2. *Ibid*, p. 222.

but they constitute themselves arbiters, and slaughter in vendetta relatives near and distant, and in despair, themselves as well. No moderate injury or insult, no moderate joy affects them, for they live in royal state, a state reputed the height of human felicity. They live in such a continued thrill of happiness that those things which give pleasure to the vulgar can give no pleasure to them—as for instance, success in love and all those things which are the subject of comedy. In order to feel such pleasures, and before they can feel them, they must have fallen from their high estate, or at least be in danger of doing so. For then only have they anything before them to hope for or take pleasure in. On the other hand, to give them tragic sorrow, they must be hurled from their eminence into a low and wretched state. But the heroes of comedy are of poor spirit, ready to obey the magistrates, to live under the laws, to bear with insults or to settle them by lawful arbiters. Unlike kings, they are not a law to themselves. They do not deal in slaughter wholesale, as do kings. To give them joy, moderate means suffice, and a moderate injury produces sadness in them.[1]

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 222. Quelle (persone) della tragedia sono reali e hanno gli spiriti maggiori, e sono altiere e vogliono troppo quello che vogliono, e se è loro fatta ingiuria, o si danno ad intendere che sia loro fatta, non ricorrono a'magistrati a querelarsi dello'ngiuriante, nè comportano la'ngiuria patientemente, ma si fanno da se ragione, secondo che l'appetito loro detta, e uccidono per vendetta i lontani ei congiunti di sangue, e per disperatione non pure i congiunti di sangue, ma talhora anchora sestessi. Alle quali persone, essendo esse poste nello stato reale, che è reputato il colmo della felicità

The hero of tragedy, then, must be a king, for in kings alone is the grandeur of tragedy found; with kings, too, the issue is screwed to the ultimate sticking point, and when their interests cross, the arbitrament is desperate. But all grandeur or nobility is not tragic, for it does not always excite pity and fear. And in seeking the character for this particularly tragic function, Castelvetro, following Aristotle, swerves from a purely æsthetic standpoint into an ethical one, as, indeed, in the preliminary question of the unmoral 'nobility,' he had ended in a social one. He now defines the tragic stimulant in terms of definitely moral qualities and degrees of goodness and badness—a course which may be inevitable, since tragedy, being an imitation of life, must

humana, e potenti a vendicarsi degli oltraggi fatti loro, non si fanno scorni, o beffe mezzane, nè essi sentono danno di roba leggiere, nè e loro fatto, nè per nozze o per adempimento di desideri amorosi s'augmenta la loro allegrezza, dimorando essi, si può veramente dire, in perpetue nozze et in continui solazzi amorosi, in guisa che per fare nascere l'allegrezza conviene che loro si sciemi della felicità, o almeno che essi caggiono in manifesto periculo, che la felicità sia per iscemare; e per far nascere la tristitia conviene, che trabocchino in misero o in basso stato col salto molto memorevole. Ma le persone della comedia sono di povero cuore, a avvezze ad ubidire a'magistrati e vivere sotto le leggi, et a supportare le'ngiurie ei danni et a ricorre agli ufficiali e supplicandogli che facciano per mezzo degli statuti loro restituire il loro honore, o ammendare il danno, non si fanno ragione da se, nè trascorrono ad uccisioni de' parenti, o di sestessi o d'altri, per le cose per le quale vi trascorono i re. E perchè si trovano in povero e humile stato per far nascere l'allegrezza non fa bisogna che si sciemi la loro felicità, potendo crescere per molti gradi e per alcuna anchora mezzana ventura, come sono nozze desiderate, e simili cose, e dall'altra parte, il danno, o il scorno mezzano possono in loro produrre la tristitia.

also be an imitation of its moral substance. Still, it is important to notice that the point of view has changed. With the new one, Castelvetro is never at ease; he is contradictory, he quibbles, and he loses the thread of the argument so much that it is difficult to get a net result from him. Up to a certain point, the course of the argument would seem to be this. Whatever awakens pity and fear is tragic; and the degree of the tragic is in proportion to the capacity to excite pity and fear. So the saint falling from prosperity into adversity is admitted as the tragic hero: "such a character in such circumstances excites more pity and fear than does a character of moderate goodness: for spectators, leading a less saintly life, feel greater fear when they see a saint suffer, saying to themselves, 'If this happens in the green tree, how much more so in the dry?' And who can cause more pity than a saint fallen into misfortune; if being unworthy of evil arouses pity, who is less worthy of evil than a saint?" [1] The theory of the uncultured mob serves to

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 277. Io non posso comprendere, come la persona di santissima vita, trapassando da felicità a miseria, non generi spavento e compassione: e molto maggiore anchora che non fa la mezzana. Conciosia cosa che coloro, li quali non menano una vita così santa, come generalmente fa la moltitudine populare, prendono maggiore spavento, e più si sgomentino, veggendo la persona migliore di loro patire, che non farebbono, se vedessono uno simile a loro, dubitando che a loro non incontri simile disaventura, e si presenta loro davanti alla mente l'argomento evangelico, se queste cose sono avenute in legno verde, quanto maggiormente averanno in secco? E a cui s'havrà compassione, se non s'ha compassione all'huomo santissimo caduto in miseria? Perchè se l'essere indegno del male genera compassione, chi n'è meno degno dell'huomo santissimo?

explain away Aristotle's objection to this type of hero: some say that such a catastrophe excites hatred against God; "but let them consider that the common people believe God incapable of injustice, and so they expend their wrath on the immediate causes of the saint's misery, absolving God from all responsibility."[1] And further, says Castelvetro, even if one grants that this anger may be provoked against God, "the effect is not fatal to tragedy."[2]

The villain passing from prosperity to adversity is not a tragic hero, in that he who falls through sin is not pitiful. "But a villain achieving success is no less tragic than a saint falling into misery."[3] Of 'error' or 'frailty'—Aristotle's ἁμαρτια—as the source of the tragedy in the hero's character, Castelvetro does not think much. How, he asks, do either Orestes or Meleager or Althæa show error or frailty?[4]

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 277. A che è da rispondere brevemente, che il commune popolo, il quale crede dio reggere il mondo, e intendere tutte le cose particolare, e haverne spetiale cura, porta anchora opinione, che egli faccia ogni cosa giustamente, e dirizzi ogni cosa a gloria sua, et ad utile de'suoi divoti. E perciò il popolo, quando vede un santo huomo patire, non si rivolge subito a biasimare et a bestemmiare dio, et a chiarmarlo ingiusto, ma, odiando le cagioni prossimi, alle quale è stato permesso di potere nuocere alla persona santa, assolve nella sua mente iddio da ogni peccato.

2. *Ibid*, p. 277. Nè lo sdegno contra dio annulla lo spavento e la compassione.

3. *Ibid*, p. 279. Si che può non meno il trapassamento del malvagio da miseria a felicità generare spavento e compassione, che il trapassamento del giusto da felicità a miseria, riguardando in quelle persone nelle quale si dee, o si può riguardare.

4. *Ibid*, p. 285.

But, as we shall have seen, the whole issue is confused. Castelvetro seeks for pity and fear, sometimes as arising from the fate of one person, sometimes as a total effect of a whole play; for he insists on a wider range of *dramatis personæ*, in accordance with his broader unity of action, two heroes, or more, or best of all, a hero and a villain in direct opposition. And in this medley, his conception of the individual tragic hero is lost. Still further, tragedy is distinguished as a species of poetry by the rank of its heroes. Moreover, he has previously allowed for a double dénouement, happy or sad. The combined result is that tragedy, with its tragic hero, loses itself in the void. The hero may be a perfect saint, or somewhat of a villain, or neither, provided only he be a king: he may pass from misery to happiness, or from happiness to misery, if only his state is kingly: and all these, with due tragic effect, if only the issue is desperate. Yet after all, Castelvetro realises that he is floundering—that he has lost the thread of the tragic which is the fountain of pity and fear, by following that which is only the tale of kings. And so he asks himself, "Are all these changes of fortune in all these varieties of character, really tragic?" "Io non sono ben certo."[1] Hence the only definite result which can be got from him is that the hero must wield a monarch's sway with regal nobility.

This requirement, in conjunction with the tyranny of verisimilitude, brings Castelvetro to

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 280.

another tenet of the critical faith of the Renaissance. In the *Opere Varie Critiche*, he attacks Giovanno Batista dalla Pigna for plagiary. "Pigna claimed credit for discovering the opinion that the subject of tragedy must not be solely the poet's invention, but must be taken from history or legend in which the people believe."[1] Castelvetro himself had upheld this doctrine long before Pigna. "The plot of epic and tragic poetry ought to comprise not only human action, but indeed human action magnificent and of a king."[2] And so a historical basis is necessary: "as tragedy must tell of the action of a king, it follows that such action must really have happened, for we cannot create a king, who never existed, by our imagination, nor can we attribute actions to such a king; indeed we cannot even attribute to a really historic king actions which he never performed: for history would give us the lie."[3] So Agathon is censured: if his Antheus is to be excused, as Aristotle excuses it,[4] where are we to

1. *Opere Varie Critiche*, p. 81. Egli (Pigna) vuole che si creda, che egli sia il trovatore di quella opinione, che la tragedia non possa aver per soggetto azione procedente dall' ngegno del Poeta, conveniendogli di necessità, che sia stata prima ricevuta dal popolo, come manifesta, o per istoria o per fama in generale.

2. *P. d' A.*, p. 188. La favola delle due poesie, epica e tragica, non simplicemente dee contenere attione humana, ma magnifica anchora, e reale.

3. *Ibid*, p. 188. E, se dee contenere attione reale, seguita che contenga attione avenuta, e certa, e d'un re che sia stato, o che si sappia che sia stato, conciosia cosa che non ci possiamo imaginare un re che non sia stato, nè attribuirgli alcuna attione, e quantunque sia stato, e si sappia che sia stato, non possiamo attribuirgli attione, che non gli sia avenuta.

4. *Poetics*. ix, 7.

stop? We should have to admit the Orlando Furioso, and the French and Spanish imbroglios. "So we see to what inconveniences the authority of Aristotle and the example of Agathon conduce in this matter. For if it is permitted to create kings who never existed, and to give them fictitious actions, it will also be permitted to create new mountains, new rivers, new lakes, new seas, new peoples, new kingdoms, and to transport old rivers into other districts, and, in short, it will be permitted to create a new world and to transform the old one."[1] In the reason by which he imagines Aristotle would have defended his opinion, Castelvetro anticipates modern feeling, only, however, to reject it: "the plot taken from history with part of its names, delights every spectator, though few of them know that the action and part of the names are really historical; hence, it is not necessary that the action and part of the names should be historically true."[2] But, says Castelvetro, this

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 212. Hora si vede, a quale sconvenevolezza si conduce l'autorità d'Aristotele e l'essempio d'Agathone, se seguiremo l'una e l'altro per buoni. Perciocchè se ci è licito a formare re non mai stati, et ad imaginarsi attioni reali non mai avenute ci sarà anchora licito a formare nuovi monti, nuovi fiumi, nuovi laghi, nuovi mari, nuovi popoli, nuovi regni, et a trasportare i fiumi vecchi d'un paese in un altro, e brevemente, ci sarà licito rifare un mondo nuovo e trasformare il vecchio.

2. *Ibid*, p. 212. Hora veggiamo quello che dice Aristotele a difesa di questa sua opinione. La favola della tragedia presa dall'historia con parte de' nomi diletta tutti gli ascoltatori e veditori, e non dimeno pochi sono quelli che sappiano che l' attione e parte de' nomi sono vere. Adunque non è necessaria cosa, che l'attione e parte de' nomi sono vere.

conclusion is refuted by experience: he has known a play win great applause until the discovery that its subject was entirely fictitious gave the spectators great displeasure, " just as if they had had a jewel and thinking it good, had rejoiced, but finding it artificial, had been cast into sorrow; whence the conclusion, the actions of kings and their names ought to be historically true and not imagined." [1]

It is to be noted that here again, as in other instances, Castelvetro has changed his point of view. His theory of the necessity of a historic basis in tragedy is developed entirely *a priori*: now he is referring it to the feelings excited in the audience, that is, he is putting it to a practical test. If the necessity of a historic basis has any fundamental justification, it is only in this second consideration. As Corneille puts it, " c'est l'histoire qui persuade avec empire." Evidently Castelvetro regards his theory as justified from both points of view.

But throughout the whole of his Commentary, he has insisted on the poet's originality and on the necessity for his poem to be the product of his

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 212. Egli è da rispondere, che tutti non sanno che l'attione o i nomi sieno veri, o imaginati, ma quelli che nol sanno, credono che l'attione sia vera, ei nomi reali veri, e perciò loro porgono diletto, e se sapessono che fossono imaginati, sentirebbono dispiacere non altramente che alcuno, havendo una gioia, e reputandola buona, gode, ma risapendo che è falsa, si contrista, e spetialmente, se gli è stata venduta per vera. Adunque l'attioni reale ei nomi de' re deono essere veri e non imaginati. Then Castelvetro mentions the play alluded to in the text above.

own genius alone. This must be brought into line. The actions which are to be the subject of tragedy must be known through history or legend; but "known only summarily and not particularly, so that without contradicting history or legend, the poet has a field for the exercise of his office, in that he can fashion the particularities concerning which history, being silent, cannot give him the lie." [1] For instance, in the Orestes, Æschylus did not know particularly, from history, the manner in which the hero killed Ægisthus and Clytemnestra.[2] "The accidents of such events are only known summarily through history and legend, so that the poet can exercise his office and show his genius in inventing the particular modes and ways by which such accidents are executed." [3] And this is the poet's sole function, as poet. "Where he is putting the history of kings into verse, he is no poet, for

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 583. . . . . le quali si sanno sommariamente, e non particolarmente per historia, o per fama, acciocchè il poeta non si parta dall'historia o dalla fama nelle cose pertinenti a re, in quanto seguita quello che sene sa, et egli habbia campo da essercitare il suo ufficio in quanto finge la particolarità, secondo che gli torna bene, poi che non ci è testimonianza nè dell'historia nè della fama contraria o diversa, che lo possa riprovare per falsario.

2. *Ibid*, p. 188. Come, per caggione d'essempio, Oreste accompagnato da Pilade suo compagno, et aiutato da lui e da Elettra sua sorella, uccise Clitemnestra sua madre: ma non si sanno particolarmente nè puntalmente le vie, che tenesse, o i modi, che usasse a pervenire a questa uccisione.

3. *Ibid*, p. 188. Gli accidenti non deono essere manifesti per historia o per fama, se non sommariamente, e in universale, acciocchè il poeta possa essercitare l'ufficio suo e mostrare lo'ngegno suo in trovare le vie ei modi particolare, per gli quali i predetti accidenti habbiano havuti il loro compimento.

he is not an 'imitator,' just as he is not a poet when he is versifying any other history." [1]

In his differentiation of tragedy from the other dramatic species, by the rank of its heroes, Castelvetro was at one with his times: so Scaliger writes, "In Tragœdia reges, principes, ex urbibus, arcibus, castris." [2] But there is a difficulty in setting parallel passages from his contemporaries alongside those of Castelvetro, for most of them were prescribing for the epic, and not for drama. "The epic hero must be the type of perfection, the acme of virtue," [3] says Tasso, and the others would have agreed. Scaliger exalts Æneas as faultless, virtuous, warlike, magnanimous, and so mighty in philosophy that he equalled Socrates.[4] Minturno finds in Ulysses a type of decorum, "of mind strong and virile, as befits a magnanimous demigod." [5] Further, to Scaliger tragedy differs from epic, "in that it seldom admits a person of low birth," [6] whilst in

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 584. Et è da sapere, che il poeta nella verità o nella fama dell'attioni reali, o dell'attioni miracolose divine principali, non è rassomigliatore, e per conseguente in questa parte, non è poeta, sì come non è poeta, quando scrive in verso alcuna historia, secondo che s'è veduto di sopra.

2. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 25.

3. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 51. L'epico vuole il sommo delle virtù: però le persone sono eroiche come è la virtù.

4. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 212. To one of the remarks of Æneas, "Cede deo," Scaliger adds the comment, "quibus verbis ne Socrates quidem umquam protulit meliora."

5. *Arte Poetica*, p. 49. Di animo forte e virile, come a magnanimo Semideo si convenia.

6. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 332. Tragœdia quamquam huic Epicæ similis est, eo in tamen differt, quod raro admittet personas viliores.

epic we have a Margites. Minturno, too, insists that the tragic hero must be of high rank: though owing to the form of his *De Poeta*, a dialogue with four interlocutors, none of whom is Minturno himself, there is danger of attributing contradictory opinions to him. But in the *Arte Poetica*, he speaks in person: "for the hero of tragedy, tall columned palaces, royally adorned, are fitting; but a low and humble hut will suit the hero of comedy." [1] Minturno, also, following Aristotle, bars out the saint and the utter villain, and accepts the theory of the ἁμαρτια; the tragic hero is one who, after advancing above his fellows in greatness, dignity and fortunes, falls into extreme infelicity through a human error:[2] but Minturno's reasons are absolutely unæsthetic, for the man miserable through sin offers such a fine subject for the bishop-critics's pulpit. Minturno's Latin work, however, seems much more Castelvetrian and Cornelian in this matter: "cum autem Tragicus, ut latissime demonstratum est, in summo ac præstantissimo et rerum et personarum genere versetur, necesse utique est, seu vitia, seu virtutes effingat, ut maxime quidque præstat, imitetur." [3]

1. *Arte Poetica*, p. 150. Nè lascerò d'ammonirvi, che alle tragiche persone convengono palazzi di colonne e d'altezze, e d'insegne reali ornati: alle comiche basse ed umile casette.

2. *Arte Poetica*, p. 76. In tragedia si reca innanzi agli occhi l'esempio della vita e li costumi espressi di coloro, i quali avanzando gli altri nelle grandezze e nelle dignità e negli agi della Fortuna, sono per umane errore in estrema infelicità caduti.

3. *De Poeta*, p. 261.

This is much like the nobility, in goodness or badness which Castelvetro demands for the hero: and it is an exact prototype of Corneille's "caractère brillant et élevé d'une habitude virtueuse ou criminelle." But the conclusion to the above quotation from Minturno is symptomatic, "cum enim audaces describet, audaciam, cum modestos, modestiam sibi esse describendam putabit: quem ad modum in Ænea pietatis exemplum, impietatis in Menzentio Virgilius effinxit": [1] and here the breach between Minturno and Castelvetro is obvious. Minturno is much sounder when he says of the tragic hero—as Castelvetro too had said in other words—"cujus sibi quisque fortunæ fuerit faber." [2] Only thus is character destiny.

1. *De Poeta*, p. 261. 2. *Ibid*, p. 43.

CHAPTER IX.

The Function of Tragedy.

The Aristotelian function of tragedy—"through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions"[1]—finds little place in Castelvetro's tragic economy. Tragedy works through pity and fear, "per operatione della compassione e dello spavento":[2] but the excitement of these passions is its utmost scope as a poetic species, "its efficacy to produce fear and pity in the mind of the audience."[3] The purgation of the emotions is a moral and utilitarian question with which the poet has nothing to do. Aristotle, says Castelvetro, does indeed adopt the katharsis in his definition, "but only incidentally and for a special purpose, namely, to defend tragedy from Plato's imputations."[4]

1. *Poetics*, vi, 2 (Butcher).
2. *P. d' A.*, p. 152.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 268. . . . . l'efficacia della tragedia in produrre spavento e compassione nell'animo de' veditori.
4. *Ibid*, p. 9. In a note to the first paragraph of the *Poetics*, Castelvetro writes—Queste parole non sono da interpretare, che Aristotele voglia dire, qual forza habbia ciascuna spetie di poesia nell'animo nostro per purgarlo dalle passioni: perciocchè egli non dice mai in questo libro questo di niuna spetie, come di spetie. Egli dice bene che la tragedia libera l'animo nostro dalle passioni misericordia e spavento, ma la tragedia non è spetie di poesia, io dico, che non è spetie delle prime di poesia, di cui parla Aristotele senza fallo in questo luogo, et intende come si vedra, et oltre a ciò, dice egli quello della tragedia incidentemente per difenderla dall'accuse fattele da Platone suo maestro, in guisa che non faceva mestiere farne mentione in propositione.

According to Castelvetro, Plato cast out tragedy from his republic, because he believed that its influence was liable to make citizens vile, cowardly, and soft-hearted; so he cast it out in order that the people, not having the opportunity of seeing men of valiant reputation act like the soft-hearted, the timid, and the vile, would not be able to console themselves in that way, and would not be able to pardon such qualities in themselves on the grounds that kings displayed them in tragedy; as also, by their having no chance of seeing tragedies, people would not have that opportunity of learning to give way to the tragic emotions, beyond what was fitting.[1] But, says Castelvetro, Aristotle replied that tragedy has exactly the opposite effect; by its example and its representation, it makes the base spectators magnanimous, the timid, courageous, the soft-hearted, firm: for by frequent presence at the representation of tragedies, people accustom themselves to seeing things worthy of pity, of fear, and of cowardice, and hence, accustom themselves to being neither soft-hearted nor timid nor base, for tragedy with pity and fear

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 116. Parendo a Platone che la tragedia con l'essempio delle persone tragiche potesse nuocere a'cittadini e fare piggiorare in loro i buoni costumi, facendogli vili, codardi, e compassionevoli, non vuole che ella si rappresenti nel suo commune, acciocchè il popolo, udendo e videndo gli huomini stimati di molto valore, fare e dire cose, che fanno e dicono i compassionevoli, gli spaventati, ei vili, non si consoli e perdoni a se stesso la tenerezza dall'animo suo, e la paura, e la pusillanamità, veggendovisi havere compagni di grande affare, come sono i re, e non imprenda, seguendo loro, a lasciarsi trasportare oltre il convenevole da simili passioni.

purges and expels from the heart those same passions.[1] Castelvetro illustrates his conception of Aristotle's theory of purgation thus: wine freely mixed with water, has not the strength of pure wine; a father's love for his two sons is stronger than it could be for a hundred of them: in a similar way, the emotions of pity and fear, if excited by only a few cases and if directed towards only a few pitiful and fearful things, are more vigorous and move more than they do when they are directed towards and excited by many cases worthy of pity and fear: hence tragedy, which presents to us many such actions, making us see and hear many more of them than otherwise we should do, causes a diminution in us of the intensity of pity and fear.[2]

The fact that Castelvetro did not fully realise

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 117. Aristotele ripruova con poche parole quello che dice Platone, affermando che la tragedia opera dirittamente il contrario, ciò è, che con l'essempio suo, e con la spessa rappresentatione, fa i veditori di vili magnanimi, di paurosi sicuri, e di compassionevoli severi, avezzandosi per la continua usanza delle cose degne di misericordia, di paura, e di viltà, ad essere nè misericordiosi, nè paurosi, nè vili, in guisa che la tragedia con le predette passioni, spavento e misericordia, purga e scaccia dal cuore degli huomini quelle predette medesime passioni.

2. *Ibid*, p. 117. Così la compassione e lo spavento degli huomini, rivolgendosi intorno a pochi casi compassionevoli, e spaventevoli, sono più vigorosi in loro, e più gli commuovono, che non fanno quando si spargono in più avenimenti degni di misericordia e di paura. Adunque la tragedia, che ci rappresenta simili attioni e cele fa vedere et udire molto più spesse, che non udiremmo nè vedremmo senza lei, è cagione, che la compassione e lo spavento si diminuisca in noi, convenendoci compatire l'affetto di queste passioni in tanto diverse attioni.

Plato's position need not detain us here. His own position is this. The purgation is utilitarian, and imposes a moral restriction on an æsthetic species:[1] hence the katharsis is to be rejected: "for if poetry has been fashioned primarily for delight, and not for utility, why in one species of poetry, *i.e.*, in tragedy, is utility chiefly sought? Why is not delight sought primarily in this species, without regard to utility?"[2] It is sufficiently plain that Castelvetro did not fully realise Aristotle's intentions: for instance, an alternative word he uses for purgation is '*scacciamento*,' 'expulsion';[3] he also states "that tragedy liberates our mind from the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 505. . . . . alcuno giovamento, ... , come è la purgatione dello spavento e della compassione per mezzo della tragedia.

2. *Ibid*, p. 275. Perciocchè se la poesia è stata trovata principalmente per diletto, e non per utilità, come egli (Aristotele) ha mostrato là, dove parlò dell'origine della poesia in generale, perchè vuole egli, che nella tragedia, la quale è una parte di poesia, si cerchi principalmente l'utilità? Perchè non si cerca principalmente il diletto, senza haver cura dell' utilità? della quale o non si dee tener conto niuno, o almeno non sene dee tener tanto, che per suo rispetto si rifiutino tutte l'altre maniere di tragedie, le quali ne sono prive, senza che si ristringe ad una maniera sola d'utilità, che è il procacciare solamente la purgatione dello spavento e della compassione. E non dimeno, se la utilità si dee considerare, si dovrebbono anchora altre maniere di tragedie potere rappresentare, come per caggione d'essempio, quelle che contengono la mutatione de' buoni di miseria in felicità, o la mutatione de' rei di felicità in miseria, acciocchè il popolo si confermasse, certificandosi per gli essempi proposti in questa santa opinione, che dio habbia cura del mondo e providenza spetiale de' suoi, defendendo loro, e confondendo i suoi ei loro nemici.

3. *Ibid*, p. 299. Yet some colour for this expression might be found in Aristotle, *Pol.* viii, vii.

emotions of pity and fear";[1] and, like Corneille, he considers pity and fear separately—"let us speak separately of pity and fear."[2] But his main position is clear. Tragedy is fulfilling its function by the mere excitement of pity and fear. This, however, is not the function peculiar to tragedy: the epic has the same aim: "it is difficult to imagine that Aristotle thought that the epic had not or could not have a pitiful and a fearful subject or that such a subject should be regarded as peculiar to tragedy, and not common to tragedy and epic."[3]

And yet, following Aristotle, Castelvetro holds that tragedy has a specific function as distinct from that of the epic as it is from that of comedy.[4] Poetry, he has continually insisted, seeks to give pleasure, and tragedy, being a species of poetry, must fulfil this function. He has no idea of the true emotion of tragic art, the "shadow of the pleasure which exists in pain." Aristotle, he thinks, made the purgation itself the spring of

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 8. La tragedia libera l'animo nostro dalle passioni, misericordia e spavento.

2. *Ibid*, p. 303. Diciamo separatamente dello spavento e della compassione. Cf. also the heading of a paragraph, p. 233. Come spavento o compassione procedono da chi patisce horribilità: in this case Aristotle also had used the disjunctive conjunction.

3. *Ibid*, p. 276. Perciocchè non mi posso imaginare che Aristotele havesse opinione, che l'epopea non havesse, o non potesse havere soggetto spaventevole o compassionevole, in guisa che simile soggetto si dovesse domandare proprio della tragedia e non commune alla tragedia e all'epopea.

4. *Ibid*, p. 293. Altro diletto dee essere quello che nasce dalla favola della tragedia, altro quello che nasce dalla favola della comedia, e altro quello che nasce dalla favola dell' epopea.

the tragic delight.[1] But this does not satisfy Castelvetro: "by the word ἡδονή[2] Aristotle undoubtedly refers to the purgation and expulsion of pity and fear by the operation of the same emotions: even supposing this purgation and expulsion takes place as he affirms, yet it is obvious how inappropriately it is called ἡδονή that is, pleasure or delight; it should be called directly utility, for it is the acquisition of the soul's health by a sufficiently bitter medicine."[3] What then is the pleasure of tragedy? "What is the delight which can be drawn from seeing a good man unworthily hurled from happiness to misery?"[4] It appears that pain alone could result.[5] One may point out here a verbal confusion which is arising: 'compiacere' is being used synonymously with 'diletto,' and 'dispiacere' as its opposite; and so gradually the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 300. . . . . la quale purgatione è il diletto, di cui qui si parla.

2. *Poetics*, xiv, 2. οὐ γὰρ πᾶσαν δεῖ ζητεῖν ἡδονὴν ἀπὸ τραγῳδίας ἀλλὰ τὴν οἰκείαν.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 299. Hora non ha dubbio niuno, che Aristotele intese per lo voce ἡδονὴν la purgatione e lo scacciamento dello spavento e della compassione dagli animi humani per opera di queste due medesime passioni nella guisa che habbiamo di sopra allargo dichiarato. La quale purgatione e lo quale scacciamento, posto che procedessero, sì come egli afferma da queste medesime passioni, veggasi quanto propriamente si possano domandare ἡδονή, ciò è, piacere o diletto, dovendosi dirittamente chiamare utilità, poi che è sanità d'anima acquistata per medicina assai amara.

4. *Ibid*, p. 299. Ma altri potrebbe domandare, quale sia questo diletto, che si trahe di vedere uno huomo da bene indegnamente di felicità traboccare in miseria.

5. *Ibid*, p. 299. Non si ne dee ragionevolmente potere trarre diletto, ma si dispiacere.

idea of 'compiacere,' moral satisfaction,[1] is intruding on the idea of 'diletto,' æsthetic pleasure.

But Castelvetro has his own idea of the tragic delight. First, as in all poetry, there is the pleasure arising from the marvellous, the "pleasure of knowing all things, especially those which one believes never could happen":[2] one of the sources of our pleasure in the Orestes is of this kind, "for here we become aware of something which we believed could not happen, this being the proper pleasure arising from the marvellous."[3] But in a drama like Œdipus, this kind of delight is accompanied by an apparently opposite feeling, "a dissatisfaction arising from events which happen contrary to

1. Cf. *Poetics*, xiii, 2, where Aristotle's τὸ φιλάνθρωπὸν is represented by Butcher's "moral sense" and Castelvetro's "compiacimento."

2. *P. d' A.*, p. 553. Il piacere, che prendiamo di sapere tutte le cose, e spetialmente quelle, le quali non credavamo potere avenire.

3. *Ibid*, p. 553. Perchè impariamo quello che non credavamo potere avenire, e questo è proprio piacere nascente dalla maraviglia. The extract reads in full—Noi prendiamo due piaceri, l'uno, perchè impariamo quello, che non credevamo potere avenire, e questo è proprio piacere nascente dalla maraviglia, e l'altro, perchè aviene quello, che desideravamo che avenisse. Di questi due piaceri s'avide il Boccaccio, nominando quello della maraviglia Del Modo, e quello del desiderio Dell' Effetto, quando, parlando di Pinuccio e d'Adriano, che in maraviglioso modo erano giaciuti, l'uno con la Nicolosa, e l'altro con la madre della Nicolosa, disse "Rimontati a cavallo sene vennero a Firenze, non meno contenti del modo, in che la cosa avenuta era, che dell'effetto stesso della cosa." If Castelvetro had followed out this suggestion of a pleasure of the mode and a pleasure of the effect, he might have made a firm distinction between æsthetic pleasure and moral satisfaction, and in that way have been spared the critical descent of which the above chapter is a record.

our desires."[1] And in the best tragedies, that is, where the dénouement is sad, this displeasure is always present. How then is the function of tragedy the provision of delight? "The pleasure excited by poetry has two modes, one oblique, one direct."[2] When the good man passes from misery to happiness, we are happy, feeling that he deserved his exaltation.[3] But when the good man falls into misery, we have a feeling of sadness; this sadness, however, is itself a pleasure, because we recognise that it is due to our having an inherent sense of the injustice of the good man's evil fate.[4] The former pleasure, Castelvetro calls 'direct': it is the special end, in one form, of the epic, and in another, of comedy. The latter pleasure he calls 'oblique': and this is the proper end of tragedy.[5] So,

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 553. . . . . dispiacere, che prendiamo degli avenimenti, che avengono contra la volontà nostra, ciò è, contra quello che desideriamo.

2. *Ibid*, p. 696. Il diletto si divide in due parti: l'una è diletto oblico, e l'altra diletto diritto.

3. *Ibid*, p. 279. . . . . perciocchè tanta allegrezza sente il huomo, veggendo il giusto essaltato.

4. *Ibid*, p. 122. . . . . perciocchè con quel dispiacere ci riconosciamo essere buoni, conciosia cosa che ci contristiamo del male del buono, e del bene del reo, e ci paia d'essere giusti: onde godiamo per quel dispiacere della riconoscenza della nostra giustitia: il che è diletto grandissimo e verace.

5. *Ibid*, p. 696. Ma ci dobbiamo ricordare di quello che è stato detto di sopra, che il fine della poesia è il diletto, e che il diletto si divide in due parte. L'una è diletto oblico, e l'altra, diletto diritto. Il diletto oblico è proprio della tragedia, il quale si sente quando una persona da bene cade di felicità in miseria, e pare esser generato dalla compassione e dallo spavento nella guisa che dicemmo di sopra. Il diletto diritto di nuovo si divide in due parti; l'una è di quello, che si prende dall' avenimento delle due diverse persone buone e ree, felice per le buone, et infelice per le ree; e l'altra è di

attributing similar opinions to Aristotle, Castelvetro sums up thus: "According to Aristotle there are four kinds of pleasure. The first is the pleasure arising from the sad fate of a person, good or moderately good, who falls from happiness to misery: this pleasure we have called oblique, and shown that it is caused obliquely. The second is the pleasure arising from the happy fate of a person, good or moderately good, and from the sad fate of the wicked; this pleasure we have called direct, and shown that it arises directly. The third is the pleasure of the happy fate common to persons of all kinds, friends and enemies: this pleasure can be called direct popular pleasure. The fourth is the pleasure caused by a fearful and monstrous spectacle; this can be called artificial, spectacular pleasure. Now Aristotle accepts in tragedy the first and second kinds of pleasure, and commends them, the first, however, more than the second: but he will not have them in comedy: the third and the fourth, as far as tragedy is concerned, he dismisses with blame." [1]

quello, che si prende dall' avenimento felice per l'une e per l'altre persone diverse. Di queste, la prima parte è propria dell'epopea, e la seconda propria della comedia: nè il diletto diritto può essere generato da spavento o da compassione.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 295. Aristotele fa quattro maniere del diletto. La prima è del diletto procedente dal fine misero della persona mezzana o buona, quando trapassa da felicità a miseria, che habbiamo nominato diletto oblico, e mostrato nascere oblicamente. La seconda è del diletto procedente dal fine lieto della persona mezzana o buona, e dal fine tristo della persona malvagia, che habbiamo nominato diletto diritto, e mostrato nascere dirittamente. La terza è del diletto del

Comment is unnecessary. Castelvetro rejected the purgation as moral: it is perhaps more psychological than æsthetic, more a doctor's question, than an artist's. But he ends in a theory moral to the extent of being evangelical. From tragedy we learn not to trust the world; and we learn this in a delightful way, much better than from a sermon, or from "la simplice voce del dottore":[1] "we are delighted much more than we should be if Sir Priest taught us the same things directly in his discourses";[2] for we learn merely by seeing, without having to ask others to teach us, and so without having to display our ignorance! How are the mighty fallen!

This adoption of a didactic function—quite unworthy of Castelvetro, and contrary to his own principles—brings him into close contact with Minturno, and the latter's theory of purgation. Unlike Castelvetro, he accepts the katharsis with all his heart: it was too deeply sanctified by Aristotle's authority to be refused. Tragedy, by the pity and the fear of the things imitated,

fine lieto commune delle diverse e tra se nemiche persone, che si può nominare diletto diritto popolaresco. La quarta è del diletto procedente da vista spaventosa e mostruosa, che può domandare diletto di spesa e d'artificio manuale. Hora la prima e la seconda maniera di diletto riceve Aristotele nella favola della tragedia, e commenda, benchè più la prima che la seconda, e rimuove dalla favola della comedia, e quanto è alla tragedia biasima la terza e la quarta.

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 299.
2. *Ibid*, p. 299. Ci diletta molto più che se altri come maestro et apertamente con parole ci'nsegnasse questo medesimo.

purges the mind of such emotions, with wonderful pleasure and profit to it:[1] that is, to Minturno, the purgation is the source of tragic pleasure, and is purely moral. Further, the epic purges also, but not so comedy.[2] Moreover, in epic and in tragedy the purgation is the primary end, "the end to which everything is directed."[3] In Minturno, there is a passing mention of the more physiological interpretation of this function, somewhat like Castelvetro's. "Tragedies move our minds and stir up our emotions; but it is not true that the more we see tragedies, the more our emotions increase in violence. On the contrary, if something should happen, which apparently would perturb us mightily, we shall bear it much the more lightly, just as a wound which is foreseen, hurts us the less when it actually befalls us. Moreover, if accustoming ourselves to fatigues makes our bodies more ready to suffer them without trouble, and if the ancient laws and customs of Crete and Sparta were framed with this purpose, then it will not seem irrational that, if we hear those things often in the theatre, which perturb and terrify us mightily, and if we are often thus stirred by them, then our mind will

1. *Arte Poetica*, p. 9. . . . . acciocchè e per la pietà e per la paura delle cose imitate e descritte, l'animo purghi (l'Epica) di tali affetti con mirabil piacere, e profitto di lui.

2. *Ibid*, p. 14. . . . . il fine, il quale come all' Epica è commune con la tragica Poesia.

3. *Ibid*, p. 76. Già potete conoscere che l'imitazione delle cose gravi e notabili, e la purgazione degli affetti, fanno questa Poesia dalla Comica e dalla Satirica differente: e, come le cose gravi e notabili sono materia di lei, così la purgazione degli affetti è quel fine al quale tutta si dirizza.

learn to bear the blows of fortune lightly." [1] "As the physician drives out poison from our bodies by means of poison, so the tragic poet purges our mind of its impetuous perturbations by the impetuosity of passions expressed gracefully in verse." [2] But Minturno lays by far the greater stress on the purely didactic interpretation of the purgation. "No doctrine can be found, to abate the passions of the mind, so much as tragic poetry does" : [3] for tragedy is the image of human life, "spectatio conditionis humanæ" ; [4] in it one sees the results of crime, and is restrained to virtue by fear, "caveatque ne sibi ipse gravis fortunæ sit faber." [5] The Aristotelian combination of pity and fear is dissolved; as indeed, by almost all critics up to Lessing, by whom, on the

1. *Arte Poetica*, p. 77. Nè, perchè le Tragiche Favole ci muovano l'animo e ci perturbino, quanto più spesso stiamo ad udirle, tanto più le passioni aumentiamo. Anzi, se cosa accade, che gravissimamente perturbarci debba, leggierissimamente la portiamo, come piaga antiveduta, la qual convien, che, quando si riceve, men doglia: perciocchè niun male inopinato avviene a colui, che s'avvezza a muoversi per tanti e sì rari accidenti altrui. Oltre a ciò, se l'esercitarsi alle fatiche ci rende i corpi più atti a sofferirle senz'affanno, ed a questo fine l'antiche leggi e li costumi di Creta e di Sparta si dirizzavano, sarà fuori di ragione, che udendo e mirando noi sovente ne' Teatri quel, che forte ci perturba e spaventa, l'animo nostro impari di sostener lievemente i colpi della fortuna?

2. *Ibid*, p. 77. Nè più forza avrà il Fisico di spegnere il fervido veleno dell'infirmità, che'l corpo affligge, con la velenosa medicina, che'l Tragico di purgar l'animo delle impetuose perturbazioni con l'empito degli affetti in versi leggiadramente espressi.

3. *Ibid*, p. 77. Laonde è da tenere, niuna dottrina ritrovarsi, che tanto abbatta la passione dell'animo, quanto fa la Tragica poesia.

4. *De Poeta*, p. 65. 5. *Ibid*, p. 64.

other hand, it was pressed beyond warrant. Fear is a good moral scourge; but what is to become of pity? In Minturno, it becomes, for purgatorial purposes, merely a sympathetic admiration, an incitation to imitate the mighty heroes of literature.

Scaliger has little to do with the katharsis. In his presumptuous emendation of Aristotle's definition of tragedy,[1] it is omitted; and Scaliger explains the omission by asserting, in terms somewhat similar to Castelvetro's, that the restriction of the tragic passions to pity and fear, is an undue limitation. Moreover, Scaliger realised that by his theory of purgation Aristotle did not intend a didactic function: otherwise it would not have been omitted from the Seven Books on Poetry, for to Scaliger all the delight of tragedy was in its moral discipline.[2]

One further remark may be added on a textual matter. Castelvetro makes the Aristotelian purgation one, through pity and fear, of "such passions."[3] Minturno reads "that pity and fear is excited, to purge the mind of similar passions": [4] his whole treatment, however, shows not only that he regarded the purgation as affect-

1. Vide p. 99.

2. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 338. Sed hic occurret aliquid, positam esse in Poeseos definitione delectationem. At in Tragœdia, mæror, luctus, planctus, miseriæ, qui possint oblectare? Quæ enim non in lætitia sola jocunditas sita est, sed ex quacunque disciplinæ adeptione capi potest.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 113. . . . . di così fatte passioni. Vide supra, p. 94, note 2.

4. *Arte Poetica*, p. 112. . . . . che desti pietà e spavento a purgar l'animo di simili passioni.

ing the entire range of emotions, but that he did not limit the instrumentality to pity and fear. In this respect, as in many others, a middle course is steered by Tasso; according to him, tragedy purges all the emotions by the instrumentality of pity and fear.[1] And in the whole range of Castelvetro's "misericordia" and "spavento," Minturno's "pietà" and "paura," and "pietà" and "spavento," and Tasso's "terrore" and "compassione," Aristotle's pity and fear, ἔλεος καὶ φόβος, is to seek.

1. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 18. L'operazione della tragedia è di purgar gli animi col terrore e colla compassione.

CHAPTER X.

Comedy and Epic.

Castelvetro wrote no essay of the idea of comedy. He has but a few incidental remarks on the comic, and he limits it, as Aristotle had done, to the ludicrous. The ludicrous which is the source of the comic entails no sense of injury or of destruction: the laughter of the comic spirit is an unmixed pleasure, "being moved by pleasing things appealing to the sentiments or the imagination."[1] The subject of comedy is "human turpitude, either of mind or of body";[2] but if of the mind, "arising from folly, not from vice";[2] if of the body, "a turpitude neither painful nor harmful."[2] The greatest source of the comic is deception, either through folly, drunkenness, a dream, or delirium; or through ignorance of the arts, the sciences, and one's own powers; or through the novelty of the good being

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 92. Il riso si muove in noi per cose piacentici comprese per gli sentimenti o per l'imaginatione.

2. *Ibid*, p. 92. Castelvetro gives a summary in tabular form:—

Turpitudine Humana.
1. Quella dell'animo.
2. Quella del corpo.

1. i. Turpitudine procedente da malvagità.
ii. Turpitudine procedente da schiocchezza.
2. i. Turpitudine dolorosa o nociva.
ii. Turpitudine non dolorosa, non nociva.

He rejects 1. i, and 2. i, admitting only 1. ii, and 2. ii, as comic subject.

turned in a wrong direction or of the engineer hoist with his own petar; or through deceits fashioned by man or by fortune.[1] If a person is deceived in any of these ways, yet within this limit, acts of his own free will under no other compulsion, then he is comic, for he is ridiculous.

Castelvetro has no idea of the comedy which is not ludicrous; he is thus mainly concerned with farce. Comedy is sharply distinguished from tragedy: "the private action of a private citizen is the subject of comedy, as the actions of kings are the subject of tragedy": [2] minor insults, petty deceptions, especially in love, these are the plots of comedy. Its characters are of poor spirit and of low estate,[2] and their whole pleasures are in amorous delights.[3]

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 98. Again he gives a table, this one consisting of things ludicrous, and so comic:—

Prima Maniera: Carità.	Di persone prossime o amate Di cose desiderate.
Seconda Maniera: Inganni.	Per isciocchezza, per ebbrezza, per sogno e per farnetico. Per ignoranza d'arti, di scienze, di proprie forze. Per novità del traviare il bene in diversa parte, o del rivolgere le traffiture nell' autore. Per insidie tese da huomo, o dal caso.
Terza Maniera: Vitii coperti.	Per malvagità dell'animo. Per magagna del corpo.
Quarta Maniera: Dishonestà.	Coperta in moltitudine Scoperta in solitudine.

2. *Opere Varie Critiche*, p. 81. Azione cittadinesca privata è la materia della commedia, siccome d'azione reali è la materia della tragedia.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 222. See pp. 107 and 108 *supra*.

Hence, verisimilitude demands no historical basis in comedy: "its plot comprises only actions possible to happen, those which have actually happened having no place in it at all."[1] Everything in comedy is the product of the poet's genius. For this reason, Scaliger would make comedy almost the greatest species of the poetic art: "tantum abest ut Comœdia poema non sit, ut pene omnium et primum et verum existimem: in eo enim ficta omnia et materia quæsita tota." Like Castelvetro, Scaliger limits the action of comedy to the affairs of private persons: "tragœdia, sicut et comœdia in exemplis humanæ vitæ confirmata, tribus ab illa differt, personarum conditione, fortunarum negotiorumque qualitate, exitu. Quare stylo quoque differat necesse est. In illa e pagis sumpti Chremetes, Davi, Thaides loco humili: initia turbatiuscula, fines laeti. Sermo de medio sumptus."[2] But the comic plot must involve danger and threatened ruin: "comœdia igitur sic definiamus nos, poema dramaticum, negotiosum, exitu laetum, stylo populare. Errarunt enim, qui Latinis sic definivere, privatarum personarum, civilum negotiorum comprehensio, sine periculo. Principio aliis quoque fabulis convenit non dramaticis, quæ simplici narratione recitari possunt. Deinde in comœdia semper est periculum, alioquin exitus

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 188. La favola della comedia sempre è tutta occupata e riempiuta delle cose possibile, e in lei non hanno mai luogo le cose avenute.

2. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 25.

essent frigidissimi. Quid enim est aliud periculum, quam imminentes mali aditio sive tentatio?"[1] But Scaliger has a faculty for words full of sound and fury, meaning little.

Minturno, too, limits comedy to the action of persons of low estate. Of the three classes of people represented in drama, "one is the common class, of people who live in the country, or even in the city, and attend to the cultivation of the land, to hirings, traffics, and to similar businesses: and these are the proper subjects of comedy."[2] Cicero and Aristotle provide him with the indispensable authority for his definition: "sive Ciceronem secuti, definiamus illam esse imitationem vitæ, speculum consuetudinis, imaginem veritatis, seu, quæ cum civilia, tum privata negotia sine periculo comprehendat, sive, quod puto, Aristoteles maxime probaret, imitationem esse ad effingendam suavi puroque sermone aliquam rerum vel civilium vel privatarum actionem non sane insegnem, non gravem, sed certe jocundam atque ridiculam," and, of course, with the inevitable episcopal end, "et quidem ad correctionem vitæ accomodatam eamque integram justaque magnitudine compre-

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 24.

2. *Arte Poetica*, p. 65. Perciocchè parte ne sono gravi e rare, e di persone pricipali e grandi ed illustri, le quali prende ad imitare il Tragico Poeta; parte mezzane e communi, e di persone che vivono in contado, o pur'in Città, ed attendono a'coltivamenti della terra, al soldo, alle mercatanzie, ad altri simili guadagni, le quali il Comico come propria materia descrive. Parte umile e basse e da ridere, e di persone degnissime di muovere a fare gran risa, le quali il Satirico ci rappresenta.

hensam, iis profecto inductis, qui non luctum excitent, non horrorem, sed tamquam ludant, voluptatem agendo afferant."[1] The subject of comedy, according to Minturno, is deformity, but not as seen in its nakedness; rather a deformity which has lost half its ugliness by artistic transmutation: "hæc enim, ut Cicero ait, ridentur vel sola, vel maxime, quæ notant et designant turpitudinem aliquam, non turpiter, ut plus laudis in maledictis ille invenerit, qui quod turpe est et deforme animadverterit pulchrius aptiusque significaverit";[2] and of course, as laughter alone is sought, there must be no suspicion of sorrow—"addidit Aristoteles, sine dolore, et quidem recte. Quodenim doloris vulnus infligit, cum misericordiam concipet, quomodo risum movebit?"[2] Tragedy, then, is quite distinct from comedy: "id quoque est quo tragœdiis, comœdiæ distant. Illæ res magnas hæ tenues consectantur: illæ exprimendos, qui fuerunt præstantiores quam nostrorum temporum homines, hæ deteriores suscipiunt. Sed comici non modo servos et parasitos et scurras, sed eos etiam qui in mediocritate quadam rerum versantur, effingunt."[3]

And these are the theories of comedy which were written almost contemporaneously with "As You Like It" and the "Twelfth Night." The true offspring of the comic spirit had to wait

1. *De Poeta*, p. 280.
2. *Ibid*, p. 307. It is interesting to note how Minturno never stands on his own legs. It is always "ut Cicero ait, "ut ab Horatio scriptum est," "ut addidit Aristoteles."
3. *Ibid*, p. 24.

till our own day for its philosopher. Kant furnished a system of æsthetics in his *Kritik der Urteilskraft*: Hegel expounded a brilliant philosophy of tragedy in his lectures: but comedy waited for Meredith. And he rejected laughter, the comic mask of Aristotle, Castelvetro, Scaliger and Minturno. Yet his attitude is not a return to the one prevalent amongst the ancients, that laughter has always something low about it, "hoc semper humile," as Quintilian has it. Meredith's is merely a more subtle analysis of dramatic species: we have comedy and farce: but comedy is not farce. There is more of the true spirit of comedy in the smile of La Giaconda than in the hilarious inebriety of all Rubens' Bacchantes.

There is no need to recapitulate Castelvetro's epic theory. Sufficient has been said of it, in the course of the preceding chapters, incidentally, as it occurs in Castelvetro himself. One thing, however, is still to be noted. Castelvetro separated tragedy from the epic according to fundamental differences in their modes, tragedy imitating things by things and words by words, epic imitating words by words and things by words. So each is allotted its separate function and its separate rules. Scaliger and Minturno, despite their obsession by the division of poetry into kinds, do not do this consistently. Scaliger himself expresses his critical process succinctly: the epic is the sovereign norm from which the universal controlling rules for the composition of

each other kind of poetry are to be drawn; "ita superiora præcepta universalia ex Epica majestate mutuabimur, ut secundum cujusque aliarum idearum naturas aptentur argumenta rerum. Post igitur communes leges, privilegia specierum instituamus, ab ipsis Heroicis sumpto initio."[1] And Minturno merely adapts Aristotle's definition of tragedy for his own definition of the epic: "an imitation of serious and illustrious actions, of which a perfect and complete context is of just greatness, with melodious language without music and dance, now simply narrating, now introducing in action, and in direct speech; with the end of purging the mind, by the pity and the fear of the things imitated and described, of such emotions with wonderful pleasure and profit to it."[2]

The result is that the theory of tragedy, with a little adaptation, is the theory of the epic. The same function, the same constituent parts, the same rules apply to each with little modification: the mode and the form alone are different. But as we have seen, this difference meant to Castelvetro a fundamental differentiation in the functions, in the constituents, in the laws and in the effect of the two species, tragedy and

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 331.

2. *Arte Poetica*, p. 9. Imitazione di atti gravi e chiari, de' quali un contesto perfetto e compiuto sia di giusta grandezza, col dir suave senza musica e senza ballo, or narrando semplicemente, or introducendo in atto, ed in parole altrui, acciocchè e per la pietà e per la paura delle cose imitate e descritte, l'animo purghi di tali affetti con mirabil piacere e profitto di lui.

epic. To Minturno and to Scaliger the difference meant little more than that tragedy is of lesser form, that is, of shorter length than is the epic; and hence that tragedy contains a more restricted amount of subject matter than the epic. So Scaliger appraises the relative value of the different poetic species by this very material criterion: "epicum, quod idcirco omnium est princeps, quia continet materias universas";[1] and on such grounds the idolisation of the epic is based, with the additional recommendation that Vergil did not write drama. To Minturno, the epic is the chief of all forms of poetry, "omnium maxima":[2] "heroic poetry is the divine art and easily first in poesy."[3] Tasso limits his literary criticism to the epic, entitling his essays, "Discourses of the Art of Poetry, and in particular, of the Heroic Poem." Indeed all Renaissance criticism after Minturno's took this turn, with the single exception of Castelvetro's. He alone held that tragedy is the supreme poetic species—and in his day, Shakespeare had not yet left the woods and fields of Stratford to try his fortunes in the theatres of the metropolis. The epic may, indeed does, as the other critics unanimously claimed, produce more of the 'maraviglia': but tragedy offers the highest scope of art and is its noblest offspring, "perchè diletta più,"[4] because in tragedy the noblest æsthetic function attains its fullest fruition.

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 13. 2. *De Poeta*—Dedicatio.
3. *Ibid*, p. 105. Divina est et in poetica longe princeps.
4. *P. d' A.*, p. 697.

CHAPTER XI.

Platonism and Aristotelianism.[1]

The greater number of the treatises on the Art of Poetry produced in the Italian Renaissance, was ostensibly founded on Aristotle; in effect, however, on Aristotle with a more than liberal admixture of Horace. The belief existed down to Dryden's time, that "of that book which Aristotle left us, περὶ τῆς Ποιντικῆς, Horace his Art of Poetry is an excellent comment."[2] But the discussions in the Florentine Academy and the life-work of Marsilio Ficino promulgated a form of Platonism which appealed to almost all literary Italy, alike by its wide inclusiveness, ethical, political, æsthetic, and religious, and by its poetical mysticism increased by a permeation with Plotinian and Porphyrian phantasies. And so on the one side, we have Aristotle, and on the other, Plato: Aristotle, materialised and conventionalised by Horace; Plato mystified by Plotinus and Ficino. The Platonism and the Aristotelianism of the Renaissance stand generally in sharp opposition: the idea that Aristotle is

1. The object of this chapter is to show how Renaissance critics conceived the meaning of Plato and Aristotle rather than to attempt an exposition of the absolute relationship of the Platonic to the Aristotelian doctrines, as the author's ignorance puts the latter task beyond him.

2. Dryden, *Essay of Dramatic Poesy.*

definitely, yet courteously, opposing Plato his master, runs through Castelvetro's Poetics. The line of demarcation is broadly this. Aristotle, according to Rymer, gives precepts to make men weep: to the Renaissance in general, Aristotle is the source from which rules for the writing of poems can be drawn; in him, the critics found a practical art of poetry. On the other hand, Plato is the idealist and mystical philosopher; in him the Renaissance could find no technical rules of the art: but his speculative philosophy provided the more subtle of the Italian critics with a theory of poetry, a metaphysical system of æsthetics, and those of no speculative insight, with a gratuitous array of laureate garlands with which to crown poesy divine. Fracastoro and Tasso find in Plato the substance of their æsthetic doctrine; Minturno filches from Plato taffeta phrases and silken terms, mainly, however, with him spruce affectations.

Broadly speaking, the critics side either with Aristotle or with Plato. Attempts to reconcile the theories of the two are few, and generally, abortive. On the side of Aristotle we have first and foremost, Julius Cæsar Scaliger, with his sonorous tribute to the Stagyrite—"imperator noster omnium bonarum artium dictator perpetuus."[1] Of course, there is very little of the real Aristotle in Scaliger's Seven Books; for Horace has been interpreter. Plato is treated with the utmost contumely: "respiciat ipse sese,

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 858.

quot ineptas, quot spurcas fabellas inserat : quas Graecanicum scelus olentes sententias indentidem inculcet. Certe Symposium et Phædrum atque alia nostra operæpretium fuerit numquam legisse." [1] Minturno must be classed with the Horatian Aristotelians, despite the fact that Syncerus, one of the interlocutors in the *De Poeta,* is generally Platonic : for the general consensus is against him. The fact is that Minturno will adopt any quotation and any view which is sanctified by authority. Plato, Horace, and Aristotle are crowded together on one page; but Minturno has no idea of reconciling them. He takes from Aristotle and Horace his prescriptions for the writing of a poem, all that pertains to the form. Plato offers him mighty words for his lucubrations on the sanctity of the poet's office and its divine origin : poets are the greatest theologians, Moses, the Prophets, Orpheus, Mercurius, Homer and Pythagoras the greatest divines, in whose works the wonderful signs of things, the greatest prodigies, the figures and the mode of speech hide the truth, as the beautiful bark of trees hides the pith therein.[2] The

1. *Poetices Libri Septem,* p. 10.

2. *Arte Poetica* (Dedicatione). Perciocchè la Poesia, com'è cosa divina così è certamente arte d'Iddio, con la qual'egli non pur tutto creò, onde grecamente Poeta, cioè Fattore è chiamato; ma insegnò anchora, come le cose divine in voce spiegar si dovessero. Di che fanno testimonianza le scritture de' primi Teologi, tanto appo gli Ebrei, quanto appo l'altre genti a tutti coloro, che leggono i libri di Mosè, e de' Profetti, e d'Orfeo, e di Lino, e di Mercurio, e di Omero, e de' Pitagorici; ne' quali i mirabili segni delle cose, e i grandissimi prodigj, e le figure, e i modi del dire nascondono il vero, come la vaga scorza negli alberi la midolla.

notion expressed thus by Minturno that the essence of poetry is beautified allegory, was common in Italian criticism: it is to be found in Dante [1] and in Petrarch,[2] and after their time, it received additional impetus from Ficino's method of interpreting Platonism as an allegory of the Christian religion. So besides reminiscences of it in Minturno, there are echoes in Tasso: "Vergil and Homer describe for us not only things which are under the earth, but also things which we can hardly consider with the intellect: only they cover them with a most delicate veil of allegory." [3]

There is further Ficinian Platonism in Minturno. Poetry is the origin of all things, being the offspring of the muses, who are none other than the nine primary angelic hosts. "And the Muses, children of Jove, and nine in number, what else do they signify than the nine choirs of the celestial spirits, who sing the praise of God, and to breathe to mortals the knowledge of

1. Dante, *Lettera a Can Grande della Scala, Epist.* xi, 7. Quest' opera (il Paradiso) non che di un solo senso, può chiarmarsi polisensa, cioè di più sensi. Imperocchè l'uno si ha per la lettera, l'altro per le cose dalla lettera significate; e'l primo dicesi letterale, il secondo poi allegorico o morale od anagogico.

2. Petrarca, *Opera* (Basileæ, 1554), p. 1205. Veritatem rerum pulchris velaminibus adornare. (This passage is quoted by Spingarn, *op. cit.*, and in the Italian version of his book an additional instance of the same theory is quoted from the *Epistles* of Colvecio Salutati.)

3. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 26. Virgilio ed Omero ci descrissero non solamente le cose che sono sotto la terra, ma quelle anchora, che appena coll'intelletto possiamo considerare: ma le ricoprirono con un gentilissimo velo d' allegoria.

things, like those through whom God teaches men the sciences and the arts, and gives them laws? And the nine Intelligences of the nine spheres of Heaven, who move and govern all and sow the seeds of all things, and, as the Platonists say, inform the souls, are they not the same? And so the world has no excellence, no ornament, no perfection, for which it is not bound to the Muses and to Poesy."[1] But this high-faluting occurs in the Dedication. Once Minturno gets into the body of his *Arte Poetica*, Plato retires before Aristotle and Horace.

Castelvetro is, in a different and a truer sense, Aristotelian. Plato had absolutely no direct influence on him. Tasso, on the other hand, is a most thoroughgoing Platonist, whenever scope is offered by his attempts to arrive at a theory of æsthetics as opposed to an art of poetry. "Poetry is a seeking, and so to speak a wooing of beauty."[2] But the good and the beautiful are one; "wherever there is virtue, there is goodness, and wherever there is goodness, there is beauty."[3]

1. *Arte Poetica* (Dedicatione). E le Muse figlivole di Giove, e di numero nove, che altro significano, che i nove cori degli spiriti Celesti, che e cantano le lode d'Iddio, e spirano a'mortali la notizia delle cose: come quelli, per li quali Iddio insegnò agli Uomini le scienze e l'arti, e diede la legge? e le nove Intelligenze delle nove spere del Cielo, che muovono e reggon tutto, e infondono le semenze di tutte le cose, e come dicono i Platonici, informano l'anime, non sono elle stesse? Laonde niuna eccellenza di cose, niuno ornamento, niuna perfezione ha il mondo, di che non sia egli tenuto alle Muse, ed alla Poesia.

2. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 17. E dunque la poesia investigatrice e quasi vagheggiatrice della bellezza.

3. *Ibid*, viii, *Il Forno, ovvero della Nobiltà*, p. 19.. Dov'è virtu, è bontà, e dov'è bontà, è bellezza.

for "the good and the beautiful are convertible."[1] So poetry and philosophy are one in substance, but different in point of view, "for poetry considers things in so far as they are beautiful, philosophy in so far as they are good."[2] Moreover, the idea of the beautiful is changeless and eternal: "what things are of themselves once beautiful, are always beautiful."[3] To Tasso, also, as to Plato, the beautiful, in and for itself, is formal, "consisting in a certain proportion of members with suitable magnitude."[4] But Platonism, either in its real original meaning, or in the development of it to be found in Tasso, is not formalism, for the idea of the beautiful, being identical with the idea of the good, is more than æsthetic in substance: for this reason Tasso concludes "that no universal definition of beauty can be given."[5]

Fracastoro, too, is a Platonist. According to Mr. Spingarn, he attempts a feasible reconciliation or amalgamation of Aristotelianism and Platonism. The question turns on the idealisation which is the poet's function. Aristotle had insisted on this: but, as we have seen, Aristotle

1. *Opere* viii, *Il Forno*, p. 26. Il bello si converte col bene.
2. *Ibid*, xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico*, p. 17. . . . . perciocchè la poesia le considera in quanto belle, e la filosophia in quanto buone.
3. *Ibid*, p. 85. Che belle per se stesse una volta furono, belle sempre saranno.
4. *Opere*, viii, *Il Forno, ovvero della Nobiltà*, p. 27. . . . . bellezza, consistendo in certa proporzione di membra con grandezza convenevole.
5. *Ibid*, p. 28. Conchiudo dunque che della bellezza non si possa dare universale definizione, che bene stia.

as an æsthetic theorist did not appeal to the Renaissance critics in general; what they sought in him was a practical art of poetry. And so none of them without the assistance of Platonism formed a theory of poetic idealisation, with the single exception of Castelvetro. He alone relied throughout on Aristotelianism, and at the same time, prevented its degeneration into formalism.

Aristotle made poetry a 'more philosophic and a higher thing' than history, because poetry looks to the universal. Fracastoro starts with this idea, and enlarges it by the addition of the Platonic element of the idea of the beautiful. "Some artists consider a thing in its particular relations, but the poet considers it solely in its universal relations: so that some artists are like the painter who imitates the face and the other parts of the body just as in themselves they are, but the poet is like the painter who does not seek to imitate this and that particular feature, and not as they happen to be with all their defects in them, but, having contemplated the universal and most beautiful idea framed by his Creator, the poet creates things as they ought to be."[1] Modern opinion regards Aristotle's τὸ καθ'ὅλου "the universal," as the characteristic which is inherent in the individual as a member of the

1. *Naugerius*, p. 339. Alii si quidem singulare ipsum considerant, poeta vero universale, quasi alii similes sint illi pictori, qui et vultus et reliqua membra imitatur, qualia prorsus in se sunt, poeta vero illi assimiletur, qui non hunc non illum vult imitari, non uti forte sunt, et defectus multos sustinent, sed universalem et pulcherrimam ideam artificis sui contemplatus res facit quales esse deceret.

species. Plato's idea of the beautiful is that of an external essence by the partaking of which a thing is beautiful. It is this Platonic idea which appeals most to Fracastoro. Art may imitate the thing as in itself it really is, the simple idea, "rem nudam uti est."[1] But, if the poet stops at that, he is no true poet: "for indeed the poet does not imitate the thing barely as it is, but the simple idea of it, clothed in all its beauties."[2] Fracastoro believes that Aristotle had such an object of imitation in his mind when he named it the 'universal': but we doubt it.[3] For to Fracastoro the characteristic is not enough in itself: this may be ugly or inartistic, and "so may necessarily require the addition of some extraneous beauty."[4] And this addition, he insists—here being the attempted reconciliation with Aristotle—is not *extra rem*, unless you call everything *extra rem*, which is added to the particular and bare thing to beautify it, and not merely to make it intelligible; and in this case, the columns and peristyles you add to your houses will also be *extra rem*, for the function of a house is fulfilled by the simplest structure

1. *Naugerius*, p. 339.

2. *Ibid*, p. 340. Poeta vero non hoc sed simplicem ideam pulchritudinibus suis vestitam, quod universale Aristoteles vocat.

3. In one passage of the *Poetics*, it does appear that Aristotle conceived of an idealisation different from a realisation of the characteristic, and more Platonic in that it may imply an addition of beauty by the poet. See the parallel between tragic dramatists and good portrait-painters, *Poetics*, xv, 8.

4. *Naugerius*, p. 350. Hac de causa solis poetis effingere concessum est. Si enim rebus pulchra defuerint . . . . . adjicienda certe ea sunt.

which will shelter you from rain and cold : but if you look at things as they ought to be, and in so far as regards perfection, then these additions will not only not be *extra rem*, but will be essential and necessary : in a similar manner, those things which are added by poets in their search for perfection, are not at all *extra rem*, for a thing must be considered, not in its nudity, but in its fullest liveliness and perfection.[1] This is the expression of the difficulty confronting the art consciousness at the outset of the modern age, when the spheres of the useful and of the fine arts are no longer coincident in practice.

Fracastoro's theory implies the principle that beauty is an addition which is fundamentally independent of the essential substance of the

1. *Naugerius*, p. 355. Si enim extra rem intelligas ea, quæ extra singulare et nudam rem superadduntur, profecto sic etiam sat erit plebeio sermone uti ad explicandas res : reliquæ enim elegantiæ necessariæ non sunt. Similiter et domibus, si columnæ addantur, si peristilia et alia, extra rem erunt : sufficit enim pro fine domus, quæ ab imbribus et frigoribus nos defendat, simplex domus. At vero si res ipsas considere-mus tales, quales esse deceret, et quantum ad perfectionem spectat, illa quidem addita non solum extra rem non erunt, sed essentialia et necessaria. An debemus putare nobilium vestes extra rem esse cum sufficiant rusticanæ? Nonne vides sicut in iis, quæ a natura sunt, sua est perfectio et decor. ita et in iis esse, quæ ab arte sunt? Quam perfectionem et decorum soli magni artifices norunt; quæ si a rebus auferas, profecto animam quodam modo propriam iis abstulisti. Quare quæ et pictores et poetæ rebus addunt ad perfectionem, non extra rem sunt, si rem consideres non nudam (uti plebei artifices, aut qui fine aliquo coerciti et astricti sunt, faciunt) sed perfectam et animatam : qualem considerant summi artifices, præcipue autem ex omnibus esse vult. Si ergo illa rebus attributa perfectionem et nobilitatem rerum ostendunt, nonne utilitas magna quidem et exoptanda a cunctis censeri debet?

subject. Hence all subjects are suitable for art, if artistically treated. There is absolutely no allowance for the ugly. And this conclusion seems to be arrived at through Platonic lines of thought.

But there is another shortcoming in the Platonic theory as conceived by many of the Renaissance critics. The idea of the beautiful is eternal, and should ever be in the mind of the artist. It is forgotten, however, that Plato had said " nor can this supreme beauty be figured to the imagination like a beautiful face, or beautiful hands or any portion of the body; nor like any discourse nor any science." [1] The critics accepted the Platonic 'idea,' but they materialised it. It became a tangible model, a conventional beauty, irrespective of particular characteristic differences. Castelvetro protested against Platonic idealisation, and his words show that this is the form in which he conceived it. To him it is no more than a standard type, visible and measurable, a copy for the student artist. That Minturno's Platonic 'idea' is little more than this is evident: " when Zeuxis was to paint a most beautiful picture, he determined to paint Helena; but he did not paint his picture until he had studied many women beautiful for their figure, to find in them an example of beauty." [2]

1. Plato, *Symposium*—Shelley's Translation.
2. *De Poeta*, p. 261. Zeuxis enim speciosissimam tabellam picturus cum esset, Helenam effingendam suscepit. Nec tamen dipinxit antequam virgines forma insegnes, a quibus exemplum pulchritudinis peterit, inspexisset.

This composite model of beauty, or average form of the beautiful, Minturno regarded as the Aristotelian and Platonic 'ideal.' "But," says Castelvetro, "I do not believe that good painters have this 'ideal' example in their minds, or, indeed, in their studios. It is undoubtedly true that it is easier to draw or paint from a picture or a statue than from life; and so students are taught their art by the use of such a model or example. But that is the only case in which a model or example of beauty is of any service." [1] This protest is obviously invalid against the true Platonic ideal, and Castelvetro's utter misconception of Plato's 'idea of beauty' is patent from the fact that he regards it as a material model kept in the studio, an "essempio domestico." But in this misconception Castelvetro was at one with his contemporaries: and so his protest, though really irrelevant, is nevertheless justified in consideration of its immediate direction.

There is another incidental development of the Platonic doctrine against which Castelvetro raises his voice. The good and the beautiful are convertible: the idea of perfect beauty is merged

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 342. Io non credo che i buoni dipintori, che rappresentano le persone, habbiano questo essempio in casa o in mente. Egli è ben vero, che perchè con più agio si può coglier dalle statue e dalle dipinture l'essempio e la similitudine, che non si può dalle persone vive, si sogliono a coloro, che vogliono imparare a dipingere, proporre inanzi pitture o statue da rassomigliare, perciocchè esse ci si presentano inanzi agli occhi in uno stato, e le possiamo contemplare quanto si piace senza molestia loro, et in qual parte più ci piace, altramente non veggo, che giovi l'essempio domestico.

in the idea of moral perfection. So, in Sidney, not only do we read that the artist "painteth not Lucrecia, whom he never saw, but painteth the outward beauty of such a virtue"; but we are also to perpend "whether Nature have brought forth so true a lover as Theagines, so constant a friend as Pilades, so valiant a man as Orlando, so right a prince as Xenophon's Cyrus, so excellent a man in every way as Virgil's Æneas." But perhaps this requirement of a pattern of moral perfection in art is not a direct development of true Platonism: yet it is easy to see how Platonic thought fostered it. The Platonists, however, are not the only critics who hold the theory. Scaliger, to whom Plato is 'this Greek rogue,'[1] seizes it as a mighty power for moral discipline: "we have therefore in Æneas himself as it were that Socratic 'idea' of every person: his perfection seems indeed to outdo nature in individual men, and to emulate her in kind."[2] And so with Scaliger's contemporaries: "when the poet would describe audacious men, let him describe audacity, when modest men, modesty,"[3] says Minturno. With Tasso, too, it is the same. But Castelvetro will have none of it. The artist must have his eye on the object

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 10. Vide supra p. 143.
2. *Ibid*, p. 218. Habemus igitur uno in Æneа tanquam ideam illam Socraticam cujuscunque personæ cujus perfectio naturam ipsam in genere æmulari, in singularibus privisque individuis etiam superare videtur.
3. *De Poeta*, p. 261. Cum enim audaces describet, audaciam, cum modestos, modestiam, sibi esse describendam putabit.

to see it as in itself it really is. To work to an extraneous idea of the beautiful is something quite different from this, and the difference is fatal to art when the extraneous idea has a purely moral content.

True æsthetic idealism is not at all the contrary of realism : rather it is realism seen in the essence of its object. Minturno's idealisation cuts itself off entirely from reality : "poets increase, amplify, and exaggerate these things, that is, the monstrous they make much more monstrous, and the human, much more human." [1] Tasso's theory of idealisation, Platonic in substance and form, brings him to conclusions almost identical with those of Aristotle's theory of the 'universal,' taken in the sense of an expression of the characteristic. Nature is beautiful; art seeks to imitate its beauties : "art, which seeks to identify itself with nature, seizes on and seeks to express nature's beauty as much as it can with its own means." [2] Beauty is goodness, and all things are good in so far as they exist : "the Creator is beautiful and all his creatures in so far as they have existence are beautiful; nature is beautiful and all her works are beautiful." [3] The argu-

1. *De Poeta*, p. 38. Augent, amplificant, exaggerant hæc poetæ, videlicet, cum immania quæ sint, multo immaniora, quæ humana, multo humaniora fuisse ostenderint.

2. *Opere*, viii, *Il Forno, ovvero della Nobiltà*, p. 26. L'arte, che alla natura cerca di assomigliarsi, ritrae ed esprime questa bellezza ne' suoi magisteri quanto ella può.

3. *Ibid*, p. 26. Dunque il Creatore è bello, e tutte le creature in quanto elle sono, son belle, e bella è la natura, e belle sono l'opere sue.

ment is given more explicitly in another of Tasso's dialogues. "Existence and goodness are convertible terms, even as that which is good is also beautiful, or converting, that which is beautiful is good: consequently, everything, in so far as it has essence, has also beauty."[1] The argument is based on the implied synonymity of 'existence' and 'essence,' "essere" and "essenza": this implied identity and the denomination of it as 'beauty,' seems to be a tincture of Aristotelianism and Platonism. It makes idealisation according to the idea of beauty, a representation of the essential character: and that is Aristotle's 'universalisation.' So Tasso's conclusion is Aristotelian, and the way to it is Platonic.

Closely bound up with this, and similar to it in its process, is the theory of imitation. To Plato, imitation as an æsthetic term, had more of the mere reproduction in its connotation than it had with Aristotle. Yet the Aristotelians of the Renaissance have absolutely no feasible or even consistent theory of æsthetic imitation. Only those whose doctrines are permeated with Platonic idealism realise imitation in its true artistic function. Scaliger, halting between words, things, and ideas, makes imitation of no æsthetic import, for he understands by it

1. *Opere*, xi, *Considerazioni sopra tre canzoni di Batista Pigna*, p. 1. L'essere ed il bene sono termini convertibili, così parimente ciò, che è buono, è bello, e volgendo l'ordine, ciò ch'è bello, è buono. Onde in conseguenza ne seguita, che ciascuna cosa in quanto ella ha essenza, abbia parimente bellezza.

generally no more than "verbal expression" or at most, "the repetition of some one else's words": "there is imitation in all speech, for words are the images of things";[1] and if imitation, as Aristotle had said, is the test of poetry, "then the merchant's broker giving his master's orders on Exchange will also be a poet."[2] Minturno is in like darkness. To him, imitation is representation, that is, representation by action: he continually sets over against each other 'imitation' and 'narration' as contraries. As has been said, only through Platonism, could Aristotelian imitation come to its own.

Castelvetro, however, in a peculiar way, is an exception to this. He rejects what he thinks is the Aristotelian doctrine of imitation and substitutes one of his own, as has been pointed out previously. He would prefer to call the process of artistic production 'rivalry with nature' rather than imitation of it. But whatever the name, Castelvetro is fundamentally at one with Aristotle: artistic imitation is idealised reproduction.

From another point of view, the Renaissance critics are separated from each other by the influence of Aristotelianism and of Platonism—

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 831. Denique imitationem esse in omni sermone, quia verba sint imagines rerum.

2. *Ibid*, p. 830. Quod si sola imitatio poeseos finis est: si quicunque imitatur, is poeta est: etiam Socratica persona in dialogis, etiam orator poeta fiet in Prosopopaeisis: etiam Plato poeta erit in suis Legibus, quibus excludit a suis legibus poetam: etiam in mercatu erit institutor poeta, quum Heri jussa suis verbis explicabit: præterea Epicus, ubi introducet, poeta erit: ubi loquetur ipse, non erit.

that is, in regard to their views on the matter and form of poetry. In respect of its matter, Aristotle limited the scope of dramatic and epic poetry to human action, and in this he is followed rigidly by Castelvetro. On the other hand, as a direct sequent to the Platonic myth in which the doctrine of the recollection of knowledge is embodied, Minturno widens the field of poetic matter. There are, he says, three classes of poets: first, the hymn-writers, secondly, those who sing the 'causes of nature' (naturæ causas) like Lucretius, and thirdly, the poets ordinary. The specific form of Minturno's argument is faulty in appearance, but the implication seems good, namely, that Platonism admits in poetry a wider field of matter than does Aristotelianism.

We have seen that Fracastoro, Platonist to the core, asserts that all matter is fit subject for poetry. In this opinion he is at one with the most orthodox pseudo-Aristotelians, like Scaliger. But the standpoint of the two is quite different. Once again it is the controversy of the matter and form of poetry. Aristotle was regarded as the dictator of poetic form: a short descent, and Aristotelianism is formalism. So it is in Scaliger. He definitely asserts that letters and syllables are not the form but the matter of poetry. The antidote to this dangerous, because purely mechanical, conception of poetry was found in Platonism. Not, however, that Aristotelianism is in truth formalism. Castelvetro, uninfluenced by Plato, had neither

what Pater calls the stupidity which is dead to substance, nor the vulgarity which is dead to form: "the nature of the imitation, and specially, of the matter, is that which makes and distinguishes poets, and not the nature of the verse," [1] he says in true Aristotelian spirit. "He who treats unpoetic subjects in verse is no more than a deceiver who, clothing his matter in a covering and a colour of poetic words, would trick his readers into believing that his subject is poetic": [2] and indeed, Castelvetro goes so far as to call the plot the form of poetry.[3]

Still, Aristotelianism did seem fated to degenerate into such pure formalism as Scaliger's. Platonism, however, with its insistence on idealism, demanded attention for the substance of art. Moreover, the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus, to whose works Ficino devoted himself after he had ended his translations of Plato, was also in its turn a force against formalism and art for art's sake: "nature is a contemplative and creative energy, which gives form to matter, for form and thought are one and the same," wrote Plotinus. Indeed, mysticism is everywhere the enemy of formalism. Tasso bases a direct reply to Scaliger on the metaphysics of another Neo-Platonist, Porphyry. "I will not call letters, syllables, and words the matter of poetry,

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 26. La qualità della rassomiglianza e spetialemente della materia, è quella che fa e distingue i poeti, e non la qualità de' versi.
2. *Ibid*, p. 28. Vide supra, p. 57, note 2.
3. *Ibid*, p. 585. . . . . la favola, ciò è, la forma.

as Scaliger did, because these happen to be the material implements of speech and of verse: it seems to me that the subject the poet chooses can be called much more fittingly the matter of poetry."[1] Then Tasso proceeds to expound a notion of his own, which, despite its metaphysical terminology, seems to have in it the seeds at least of the brilliant theory which Professor Bradley works out in his *Poetry for Poetry's Sake:* matter and form in pure poetry are not merely coincident, but identical: matter is form. "As Porphyry says, there is in all things a certain something which corresponds by proportion to the matter and to the form: and so the subject as the poet first receives it, is not properly the end, even as the material cause and the final cause are not the same: but the formal and the final fall frequently together, and, as the Latins say, coincide. The end, then, is the form given by the art of the poet, who by addition and variation disposes his material and gives another appearance and as it were another face to the

1. *Opere,* xii, *Discorsi del Poema Eroico,* p. 22. E non voglio chiamar materia della poesia le lettere, le sillabe, le parole, come chiamò lo Scaligero, perchè queste sono peravventura materie dell'orazione e del verso, ma la materia della poesia mi pare che si possa convenevolmente dire il soggetto ch'egli prende a trattare, avvengache, come dice Porfirio, in tutte le cose un non so che suol ritrovarsi, che risponde per proporzione alla materia e alla forma, e questo soggetto non è propriamente fine, come parre allo Scaligero, perchè la materia non è mai fine: nè la causa materiale e la finale sono l'istesse, ma la formale e la finale sogliono spesso esser insieme, e come dicono i Latini, coincidere: il fine dunque, è la forma data dall'artifizio del poeta, il quale aggiungendo e sciemando e variando dispone la materia, e dà un'altra immagine e quasi un'altra faccia all'azione e alle cose.

actions and things as they were in the subject when he came to it."[1] That is, Tasso is on the way to the discovery that "when poetry answers to its idea, and is purely, or almost purely poetic, we find the identity of form and content":[2] and those are Professor Bradley's words. It is difficult to see how this theory could be improved. One of its implications is that some subjects are outside the field of the poetic art, in opposition to the view of Scaliger, Patrizzi, and Fracastoro. Tasso definitely says this. Yet his assertion may seem at first sight to contradict his general æsthetic theory, according to which everything is beautiful in so far as it really exists. But, he argues, and again Platonically, the ugly has no existence in a positive sense. The beautiful is the good, and the ugly is the false: but the false does not 'exist,' being defined in negative terms as a lack of the good, that is, a lack of 'essenza,' which, we have seen, is synonymous with 'essere,' existence.

If then Scaliger and Minturno are to be classed as Aristotelians, with the many reservations already made, Tasso and Fracastoro as Platonists, Castelvetro must be put in a class by himself. For, though entirely uninfluenced by Plato, though throughout under the influence of Aristotle, and indeed realising Aristotle's views more fully than any of his contemporaries, it would be unfair to call him an Aristotelian. In effect,

1. Vide supra p. 158, note 1.
2. *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, Poetry for Poetry's Sake.

he has many more things in common with the weightier matters of Tasso's theory than with that of Scaliger. Unlike Tasso, however, he never succumbs to the major Platonic heresy, that art has moral functions. Perhaps he can only be truly classified as Castelvetrian.

CHAPTER XII.

Castelvetro's Method.

Castelvetro's is a theory deduced *a priori*. It is essentially the theory of a logician of the schools. Reason is throughout the criterion, syllogism the form. Neither custom, precedent, nor authority have an ultimate sanction. All must be in logical sequence from accepted premises; and the arbiter of the logical validity is Castelvetro himself. The result is that Castelvetro acquired a reputation for contradiction. Leonardo Salviati says of him, "I believe that where he departs from truth, he does so in a spirit of emulation to show his subtlety the more, and to be contrary to others."[1] And Rapin

1. Spingarn, *op. cit.*, Appendix B, in which are printed some remarks of Salviati's from an MS. at Florence. "Fu non di manco (questo libro d'Aristotele) a questi anni di nuovo da un dotto huomo in questa lingua volgarizzato et esposto, e più a lungo che alcun altro che ciò habbia fin quì adoprato ancor mai. . . . . Nel qual comento hanno senza fallo di sottilissimi avvedimenti, ma potrebb'essere, sì come io credo, più sincero. Perciò che io stimo, che dove egli dal vero si diparte, il faccia per emulazione per lo più per dimostrarsi di sottil sentimento e per non dire come li altri. E la costui tradutioni, fuorchè in alcune parti dove egli secondo che io avviso volontariamente erra, tra le toscane la migliore. E sono le sue parole et in essa e nell'espositione molto pure, et in puro volgare fiorentino, quanto comporta la materia l'una e l'altra è dettata.

writes, "Castelvetro is naturally of a morose wit; and out of a cross humour, makes it always his business to contradict Aristotle, and for the most part, confounds the text instead of explaining it. Notwithstanding all this, he is the most subtle of all the commentators, and the man from whom most may be learned." That Castelvetro did confound Aristotle's text in many places, the foregoing chapters will perhaps have shown; as also, it is hoped, that for the greater part he realised Aristotle's meaning more clearly than did any of his contemporaries. But Aristotle's dicta have of themselves no compulsion with Castelvetro, nor those of Horace. Not that he despises Aristotle by any means: "we cannot contradict him, without feeling foolish,"[1] unless, of course, our contradiction is based on a rational theory. And Castelvetro has a most naïve way of expressing his disagreement: "since the matter is somewhat obscure, let us see if we can illuminate it."[2] The 'illumination' may involve an emendation of the accepted text of Aristotle, or it may be sought by the peculiar exegetical process which Corneille happily termed 'apprivoisement,' or it may entail an open breach with Aristotle. For to Castelvetro, the Greek philosopher is no perpetual dictator, as Scaliger would have him, or at least as Scaliger

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 27. . . . . a cui non si possa contradire, senza mostrare di sentire dello sciemo.

2. *Opere Varie Critiche*, p. 208. Ma perchè la cosa è alquanto oscura, veggiamo se la possiamo illuminare.

says he would have him, for it must be confessed that despite a sonorous lip-service, the latter has a much greater opinion of the redoubtable Julius Cæsar Scaliger than of Aristotle the Stagyrite.

Minturno's whole doctrine, on the other hand, exists on the shreds of authority which he can draw together. His *Arte Poetica* is advertised as a declaration of all which has been written on the subject by Aristotle, Horace and other Greek and Latin authors; especially by the most learned Horace, the fountain of all poetic wisdom, "whose doctrines we ought always to carry in our memory."[1] Whatever is sanctioned by ancient authority—for modern he despises—is inviolable; and so his art of poetry is no theory, but merely a patchwork. Scaliger is different only in mode, not in kind: the ultimate decision with him is not a phrase of Aristotle's or a verse of Horace's, but the practice of the divine poet Vergil. His *Poetices Libri Septem* are little more than a concordance of Virgilian loci. The result is the same. Poetry has one stereotyped form, one standard of excellence outside which nothing is poetry. In Minturno, the argument runs thus: "If the art taught us by Aristotle and Horace is true, I fail to see how a different one can be: for truth is one, and what is true once, should ever be so in all ages; time does not change truth, as it

1. *Arte Poetica*, p. 95. Convenevole cosa ancor mi pare, che gli ammaestramenti del dottissimo Orazio recarci a memoria dobbiamo.

changes manners and life."[1] And in Scaliger: "in everything, there is some one thing which is right and primary, which is the norm of the others, and to which all the others are to be referred."[2] This norm, of exclusive validity, and the universal standard, is in the one case the precepts of Horace, and in the other, the example of Vergil.

The narrowest logic of the schools, coupled, in Minturno, with an entire lack of speculative insight, and in Scaliger, with an unlimited Maronolatry, produced this dogmatism, and with it, this narrow restriction. Castelvetro, too, relied on scholastic logic in the evolution of his theory of poetry; and proceeding, like his contemporaries, *a priori*, he too might have fallen into a similar absurdity. But his literary worship was more universal, and was always this side idolatry. Moreover, his readiness to appeal to actual literature and to experience prevented his infection with the insanity of Scaliger's exclusiveness. He is more careful in the formulation of literary laws: on one occasion he says, "because this thing has happened once in one tragedy, we should not and indeed cannot

1. *Arte Poetica*, p. 33. Ma se l'Arte insegnataci da costoro, con l'esemplo dell' Omerica poesia è vera, non veggio come un'altra diversa da quella darsene possa: perciocchè una è la Verità, e quel che una volta è vero, convien che sia sempre ed in ogni eta, nè differenza di tempi il cangia, come ch'ella abbia potere di cangiare costumi e vita, per la cui mutazione non è che'l vero nel suo stato non rimanga.

2. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 331. Dicebamus supra omni in re unum quippiam esse rectum ac primum, quod aliorum norma sit, ita ut ad id cætera omnia referantur.

establish as a universal law that it should happen in all tragedies."[1] Quite early in the *Arte Poetica* Minturno claims to have promulgated final legislation on all matters poetic, except versification, for which one thing he does not propose to lay down laws, as he has done for all the other things with the authority of those whose works ought to be our inviolable statutes:[2] the omission is but temporary, however, and the laws of versification are decreed later. But Castelvetro had one ultimate test by which all the possible laws of poetry were to be tried before being finally approved, the test of experience. "Experience is the greatest possible demonstration; all things should be submitted to it, even pure reason."[3] A dogmatic theorist Castelvetro undoubtedly is sometimes, or even as a rule: for the lack of a body of Italian drama in his age made this almost inevitable; and moreover, his definite aim was to be a dramatist's pedagogue. But his dogmatism is seldom mere pedantry, very seldom indeed the mere pedantic ordination of unessential details of arbitrary

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 370. Nè perchè ciò sia avenuto in una tragedia di Carcino una volta, dobbiamo o possiamo stabilire una regola universale, che debba avenire in ciascuna tragedia.

2. *Arte Poetica*, p. 108. Nè in ciò penserò di darvi legge, come ho fatto nell'altre cose con l' autorità di coloro, l'opere de' quali esserci debbono inviolabili statuti.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 290. The quotation has been given before, but is worth repeating. Adunque, dice Aristotele, poi che la sperienza mostra questo, la quale è la maggiore demostratione, che si può fare nell'arti, e alla quale nell'arti solamente ci dobbiamo attinere, non ne dobbiamo punto dubitare anchora che la ragione ci tirasse a credere altramente.

form, as is that of Minturno and Scaliger, and, indeed, of Horace. In Horatian manner, both Minturno and Scaliger prescribe for drama five acts, no more and no less. "It is not fitting for drama to have more or less than five acts,"[1] says the latter: "comedy cannot have more or less than five acts, nor more than three interlocutors in each dialogue,"[2] writes the former, for Minturno generally goes one step further into absurdity than even Scaliger. Castelvetro is satisfied by pointing out that as a rule, dramatists have found five acts the most suitable, and "have not been minded to have more or less than five."[3]

And further, after Castelvetro has elaborated his theory *a priori*, he seeks its ultimate sanction by appeal to experience, to the actual psychological effect of the work of art embodying the theory, on the people for whom the art is ordained. For instance, to take what appears to us nowadays as one of the most flagrant examples of literary dogmatism and scholastic pedantry—the notion that the hero of tragedy must be a really historic person: that this is an essential requisite, Castelvetro would seek ultimate conviction in the fact that he has known a play lose all its proper effect as soon as the

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 34. Denominati autem sunt (actus) ab ordine, qui numero quinario complectitur. Neque enim plures paucioresve quinis esse convenit.

2. *Arte Poetica*, p. 158. La commedia ancor avere più non può, nè meno di cinque atti, nè più di tre recitanti in ciascuno ragionamento.

3. *P. d' A.*, p. 87. Non vogliono essere più di cinque nè meno.

audience came to know that its characters were entirely fictitious. It is little to the point here to remark that this must have been a peculiar audience, like children, whose breath is held by the Fairy King's exploits, but whose countenance loses its rapture, when the inevitable question as to his actual existence and the real whereabouts of his fairy court is answered by a shake of the head. But the important point is that if Castelvetro's account is an attested fact, then as an argument for the necessity of a historical basis in tragedy, it is perfectly valid. Let us take another instance. Castelvetro prescribed as hero of tragedy only him who is of kingly state. But, he says later, " it is not the nobility of the hero, but the nobility of the mode in which the poet treats him, which makes the poem more noble " : [1] that is, the artistic effect produced is the reason for the limitation of tragic heroes to those of royal degree, for nobility of treatment is incongruous with men of lower rank. Here again, we may object to the premise that only kings can be treated by the poet with a nobility fitting to tragedy : but the point is, that if the premise be granted, as Castelvetro took it to be, then the conclusion is perfectly valid. And finally, as the effect is to be the final test, mere theorising *in vacuo* is insufficient : after expounding a long theory, Castelvetro withholds final

1. *Opere Varie Critiche*, p. 278. Non la nobiltà della persona, ma la nobiltà del modo, col quale è trattata, faccia più nobile il poema.

approval—"io non sono ben certo"—that is, experience must prove.

The real danger of Renaissance criticism was that it tended to limit art to a mere scholastic exercise, and criticism to anatomy, forgetting the living function of fine art, its appeal to human nature. Apart from Castelvetro's, there seems to have been no attempt to enquire into the psychological correlative of æsthetics in the whole field of Renaissance criticism. But Castelvetro's theory of the function of art, and of its specific appeal, took criticism from the operating table of a pedant's dissecting room into a theatre of life, where the benches were crowded with a promiscuous humanity, active to feel the living force of the poet's art. Unfortunately, he assumed too much of the duties of a stage manager. At times he is dramaturgical to the extent of being inartistic: the poet's eye, he says, must be fixed on his poem, "as if he saw it being represented on the stage."[1] Aristotle says much the same,[2] but Aristotle was always something more than stage-manager.

We do not for a moment hold that Castelvetro was never pedantic: that seems to have been impossible for a sixteenth century critic. But pedantry never submerges him. A finical logic often manacles him for a period, as for instance, in the multitude of ludicrous applications of the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 369. . . . . come se la vedesse rappresentata in atto.

2. *Poetics*, xvii, 1.

conception of verisimilitude, and as in the scholastic mode of his arguments, and their illustration in exhaustive tabular form, rectangular and circular, in phantastic symmetry. But these are wearisome stumbling blocks worse in their effect on the reader than on Castelvetro's critical theory. They affect the form rather than the substance.

This is his general procedure. He sets out with premises which are regarded as axiomatic. One of these is that art seeks to give pleasure, and pleasure alone: that is, that the test of the validity of an artistic device is its effect, its capacity for giving pleasure, and that any instrument which achieves this aim is artistic. Another is that art must accept certain inevitable conditions, a fixed material, and a definitely prescribed field, as the means at its disposal. These accepted, reason elaborates the theory of fine art, or rather, the art of poetry, illustrated by appeal to Aristotle and other critical literature on the one hand, but never dictated by them, and guided by reference to a wide range of artistic literature on the other. And all the defects of Castelvetro's theory can be traced, seldom either to pedantry or to logical fallacy, but to an incomplete conception or an unwarrantable limitation of the premises from which he starts.

On the one hand, the test of art is its capacity to produce pleasure: but did Castelvetro realise the nature of true æsthetic pleasure? On the other hand, there are certain conditions of

material which limit the scope of the fine arts. As Lessing demonstrated, sculpture can never be poetry, for words are not marble. But is all art bound by the conditions obtaining only in drama? And further, in the theatre itself, are the conditions of stage production to prescribe the limits of the dramatic art? To this latter question Castelvetro answered with a decisive affirmative; and to the former, his whole theory of poetry implies a similar response. For throughout, with but one or two exceptions, he expounds a doctrine primarily for drama, and then gives it universal artistic validity: "if the plot is the end of tragedy, and *in consequence*, of all kinds of poetry," [1] is a type of this generalising process; and further, he bars out from poetry one class of subject matter, because it is not capable of dramatisation.

But whatever the defects of Castelvetro's theory, they are seldom due to a false method. He is always guided by an original power of thought and a keen insight: and herein he towers above Minturno and Scaliger. Moreover, Castelvetro was not a poet; he had no particular hearth to defend; and this gives him an advantage over Tasso. For in Tasso, there are two strains, often coincident, but generally distinct. There is Tasso the Platonist and æsthetic philosopher: and there is Tasso the author and the

1. *P. d' A.*, p. 140. Se la favola è il fine della tragedia, e per conseguente d'ogni maniera di poema, conciosia cosa che la favola tenga quel medesimo luogo in qualunque altro poema, che tiene nella tragedia, ciò è il finale, etc.

defender of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*. How much this latter fact limited the scope of his *Discorsi*, the summary conclusion of them, taken in its relation to the poem, is sufficient evidence: "let the subject of epic poetry be taken from the history of true religion, not too sacred to be entirely unchangeable, from a century neither too far from nor too near to the memory of men now living";[1] in fact let the subject of epic poetry be always and entirely like the subject of my own Jerusalem Delivered. In this respect, the *Discorsi* of Tasso bear a marked resemblance to Corneille's *Examens* and his *Discours*: for both Corneille and Tasso were debarred by their immediate purpose from that independence of judgment which is Castelvetro's.

1. *Opere*, xii, *Discorsi dell' Arte Poetica*, p. 205. Prendasi dunque il soggetto del poema eroico da istoria di religione vera, ma non sì sacra che sia immutabile, e di secolo non molto remoto, nè molto prossimo alla memoria di noi che ora viviamo.

CHAPTER XIII.

Castelvetro's Position in the History of Literary Criticism.

Apart from general historians of literary criticism, Castelvetro seems only to have been treated individually by one writer, a countryman of his, Professor Antonio Fusco:[1] and Signor Fusco has a heavy indictment against him. It comes to this: the professor comes to Castelvetro and finds he is neither a Kant, nor a Hegel, nor even a Croce; and so he is moved to jocular sarcasm. 'Risum teneatis' is the coup-de-grâce he delivers to several of Castelvetro's theories: and indeed this verse of Horace's might not unfittingly be the motto of the whole of Fusco's book. His attitude appears to us to be very severe, and moreover, very unjust: he never for one moment adopts a historical point of view, but always an absolute one. And to us, it looks as if the man, who in the sixteenth century insisted that poetry is not history, that poetry has a purely æsthetic function, that the poet must above all be original, and not a filcher from the ancients, and that poetry is not a mere practice of poetic tricks and devices sanctified by custom, it looks to us as if that man has more in him than is matter for professorial hilarity and sarcasm.

In an age when criticism was a legislation

1. *La Poetica dello Castelvetro*, Antonio Fusco, Napoli, 1904.

whose first and last sanction was the authority of the old world, Castelvetro stands forth as a critic of refreshingly open mind and independence of judgment. Art is justified by its end, by something, if not precisely inherent, yet directly immediate to itself, and not by a phrase of any the greatest philosopher of the world. Its end is an immediate consequence of its immanent nature, and is ever present with us. To look back through the ages to imitate the practice or follow the precepts of the ancients, forgetting the spirit of the day that is here, is inartistic and annihilatory. For art is always new and original, a perpetual youth rivalling nature in its creative force. But Aristotle's theory of imitation had misled the critics of the Renaissance; for they saw it but imperfectly, but through Horace, darkly. "These things then, which are in nature, are to be sought in her heart, and being dug out thence, are to be presented to the eyes of men: that this may be done most easily and most excellently, let us cull examples from him who alone is worthy of the name of poet; that is, of course, from Vergil."[1] And so Nature is Vergil, Vergil is Nature: "all those things which you shall imitate, you have in that other nature, that is, in Vergil."[2] The æsthetic

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 195. Hæc quæ natura ita constant, in Naturæ sinu investiganda atque inde eruta sub oculis hominum subjicienda sunt: id quod ut quam commodissime faciamus, petenda sunt exempla ab eo, qui solus Poetæ nomine dignus est. Virgilium intelligo.

2. *Ibid*, p. 195. Hæc omnia quæ imiteris, habes apud alteram naturam, id est Virgilium.

theory of imitation has become the scholastic imitation of the ancients. And this is the prime necessity to the poet. Judgment, too, is not denied to him: but its only function is to choose the model for imitation—a work of supererogation in the sum total of Scaliger's literary theory. "It remains then to make our poet perfect from these precepts; and that by two means, namely by imitation and by judgment, two faculties distinct by nature which he must unite in himself. He must set up nobody to imitate, and begin no mode of imitation, until he has first chosen his poet and has tried his species of imitation."[1] But obviously the model poet must invariably be Vergil, and the species of imitation that which follows its model most closely. "And so we think we have said sufficient for the use and work of imitators, of which our example, our rule, our beginning, and our end ought to be Vergil."[2]

As we have seen, there is in the Renaissance, as perhaps in Aristotle himself, a confusion of two ideas under the term 'imitation': there is the idea of a static imitation which expresses the relation of the work of art to its prototype in the ideal, and there is the idea of a dynamic imitation,

1. *Poetices Libri Septem*, p. 492. Reliquum est, ut ex his præceptis Poetam perficiamus: idque duplici via ac ratione: imitatione scilicet, ac judicio. Quæ duo suapte natura divisa, necesse est in ipso conjungi. Neque enim aut imitandum sibi proponet quempiam, aut imitationis rationem, nisi et Poetam elegerit et imitandi speciem probarit.

2. *Ibid*, p. 570. Verum satis hæc putavimus esse ad imitantium utilitatem, cujus exemplum, regula, principium, finis esse debet nobis Maro.

denoting psychologically the artistic process by which genius creates a work of art according to the ideal: the static imitation is a term which would be applied to a work of art considered as a thing in relation to another thing, namely to its ideal, and the dynamic imitation is a term which would be applied to the kind of energy involved in the creation of a work of art. Of neither of these ideas of imitation have the Renaissance critics in general a true conception. Confusion is further confounded by their doctrine of the imitation of the ancients, in accordance with which the prototype is not in the ideal, but is a concrete instance of ancient poetry, and following from this, the process one merely of mechanical copying. By the importation of idealism alone is the theory of imitation valuable, and only thus is it cut apart from its radical suggestion of copying: for we generally imply by a copy, a consideration of a concrete prototype, and a technical means of reproduction. A truer name than imitation is necessary for artistic idealisation. That Castelvetro realised. But to Renaissance critics generally, artistic imitation is imitation of the ancients. Plato's theory of ideas strengthened the error which Aristotle's terminology fostered: for a materialised idealism, a prosaic conception of the copy of a copy of the idea itself, amounts to the same as Scaliger's doctrine of the norm. But Plato might have supplied the antidote, where Aristotle was too subtle. The poets who are merely servile

imitators are cast into the same class as the lower artisans: for an imitation, in the crude sense of the word, is bound to be inferior to the object imitated, and if, as Plato considers them, both are reduced to a common denominator, that of reality, and are judged by the criteria pertaining to reality, then the imitation is logically unreal. Fracastoro formulates this Platonic objection to art, "quod imitatio semper in pejora prolabitur:"[1] but he misses its point, explaining it away by a limitation of its validity to the abuse of art only. He does not realise the fundamental fallacy. For the imitation of a true æstheticism does not involve, as it had seemed to require to Plato, this reference to the same criteria. The object of imitation is ideal, and is to be judged by the standard of ideal reality. The imitation itself is a work of art to be judged only by æsthetic laws, and in this code, laws of interest, questions in any way dependent on the idea of the existence of the objects imitated in art, are entirely inexistent.

But in that system of art whose works are produced by an imitation of the ancients, both the object of imitation and the imitation itself, that is, both the poems of the ancients, and the poems of their modern imitators, are to be weighed in the same scales: for both are of a common denominator, both are art. And so Plato's principle that the imitation is necessarily of less value than the prototype is of valid appli-

1. *Naugerius*, p. 362.

cation: "der Nachahmer ist allezeit unter dem Nachgeahmten geblieben," says Winckelmann, who was the first of modern theorists to realise the essence of ancient art. That Castelvetro, in the face of all his contemporaries, will have none of the imitation of the ancients, is a blow struck for the emancipation of art, and for its eternal good, even although the specific reasons he alleges for the rejection of this noxious dogma are no more than specious: he rejects it because reproduction in the sense of copying involves no artistic difficulty overcome.

This brings us to one of the central pillars on which Castelvetro's art of poetry is built, the notion of the *difficulté vaincue*, the fatigue to be endured by the artist, of which the flagrant signs are a witness to his originality. This idea, more than that of verisimilitude, pertains to the essence of Castelvetro's theory. For the uncultured mob recognises art by the clear marks of the difficulty of its production: these to them are the positive sign of art: the verisimility is not so obviously apparent, being more negatively so, rather in the breach than in the observance.

The proclamation of the true poet is the sign of the difficulty overcome. This is a most dangerous doctrine: but Castelvetro fits it in with his theory of conscious, as opposed to inspired, art, and further still, with his theory of the appeal of art primarily to the "moltitudine rozza." For it is the apparent sign of wonderful skill which first excites the untrained observer.

This was once made clear to us in the heavily curtained semi-darkness of the sanctum in the Dresden art gallery where reposes the Sistine Madonna. The majority of our fellow onlookers were carried away by the technical mastery of colour which enabled Raffael to crowd his sky with half-invisible angel heads. Only the few—it was a general holiday—were held at once by the awful strangeness of limitless hope in the great dark eyes of the Madonna, and the firmness of simplicity in the childlike composure of her diminutive lips, the tragic joy of it all; the majesty of heaven immanent in the broad forehead of the child, the touch of earthly love in the unkempt hair of finest silken texture, ruffled with nestling on his benign mother's cheek, and the weight of the cross on the lower part of the face, darkened in the shadow of Mary's breast; while the earth bows in joyful adoration with the two figures below, too radiant and benign for humility, on the one side, a priestly patriarch, the Church's hope, the beauty of the conviction of age, on the other, a girl's consciousness of the strength of native righteousness, the beauty of the trust of youth: and above them all, the half-invisible, ætherial angel faces, below them, two chubby wingèd cherubim of sunny Italy; the fulness of earth and the fulness of heaven on a few square yards of canvas. In the sight of these, thoughts of the painter's brush and of his palette have no place. Perhaps to an artist the picture opens Raffael's work-room and reveals a

patchwork of innumerable shades and tones, rejected one by one till the colours were blended perfectly. From his own technical knowledge, and from his own weaker efforts, he may see the difficulties overcome by the master. So in the literary art, Pater speaks of "the logically filled space connected always with the delightful sense of the difficulty overcome." But Pater himself was a stylist by effort and perseverance; and he is speaking of the feelings of the artist, not of those of the reader.

Summa ars celare artem. To fix the eye on the artist is a tacit declaration that the substance of art is immaterial. Cleverness can be shown in the painting of a flower vase as well as in the portrayal of a Monna Lisa: but not genius. Hence, the failure to satisfy our artistic sense in the greater part of the Dutch school of still life: the Berlin Gallery has a huge canvas on which the painter of the Laughing Cavalier dissipated his time and degraded his genius to copy an exquisitely wrought chalice of gold; and this type of work has the approbation of the difficulty overcome, though it would not be justified by Castelvetro's full theory of art, for he insists on a human substance. It may be true, as in Pater's case, that a pleasure is derived by the artist himself from the sense of conquered difficulty: but it certainly is not true in most cases. To set over against his opinion is that of a greater artist than he. Wagner wrote to Mlle. Villot in 1860, "Glauben Sie mir, es gibt

kein grösseres Wohlgefühl, als diese vollkommenste Unbedenklichkeit des Künstlers beim Produzieren, die ich bei der Ausführung meines Tristan empfand." True art is untrammelled, a thing of inspiration. The process of its birth, if not entirely hidden, is not primarily apparent; it does not enter into the immediate pleasure. The realised genius confronting the senses is the art, and the art alone. The purely intellectual interest is a secondary pleasure outside the scope of pure æsthetics. It is not part of the philosophy of the beautiful as a thing of beauty, but is a contribution to the science of the psychology of genius. And in a concrete work of the highest art, the artist is forgotten. He only emerges at the call of after-consideration, when art is being regarded in its human, philosophical or historical aspects: and though these questions are essential to a universal culture, where art is at one with the manifold expressions of life in full, yet they are an excrescence of art, and not of its essence. The difficulty overcome is no true æsthetic pleasure. But it is presumption to write where Ruskin has written before. "The skill of the artist and the perfection of his art are never proved until both are forgotten. The artist has done nothing till he has concealed himself, the art is imperfect which is visible, the feelings are but feebly touched if they permit us to reason on the methods of their excitement . . . . . The power of the masters is shown by their self-annihilation. It is commensurate with the

degree in which they themselves appear not in their work. The harp of the minstrel is untruly touched if his own glory is all that it records. Every great writer may be at once known by his guiding the mind far from himself to the beauty which is not of his creation, and the knowledge which is past his finding out."[1]

One of Dante's arguments for the choice of the vulgar tongue as the language of poetry, is its "prontezza di liberalità"; all humanity, the vulgar and the learned, the peasant and the noble are within the radiance of its largess universal as the sun. The Renaissance, however, was essentially aristocratic, and its aristocracy was one of learning more than one of blood. Hence the tendency for poetry to be academic, the pleasure of the select. In Castelvetro there is the reaction. Poetry is by its nature an appeal to the mass of the people, and their pleasure alone is its function. This attitude is thoroughly typical of Castelvetro. He sees the error of his times, and sets himself against it: but in the reaction, he drives too far, and passes the point where impartiality would halt. In a similar way he protests rightly that poetry is not history: he ends wrongly by denying that the matter of history can be the matter of poetry. In this way, also, he raises his voice against the literary trickery and the codified artifices which a Horatian and Virgilian idolatry had sanctified as the sole instruments of poetry; he will have

1. *Modern Painters*, Preface to 2nd Edition.

no compulsion of Horace's artificial order in the epic, "in medias res non secus ac notas, auditorem rapit": but in the rejection, he falls into a dogmatism almost as dangerous; the poet must follow the strict order of history. That is, in casting out artificiality, Castelvetro often leaves little room for art.

And so too, in this case of the function of poetry. Dante's universality of the appeal of art is limited by Castelvetro to the pleasure of the mob. As a contribution to æsthetic theory, this is ultimately unsatisfactory: as an immediate counterblast to the pedantry of his own times, it is incomparably salutary. Art had its origin in human nature, says Aristotle, because it is a human necessity. The baby is crooned to sleep by a lullaby: youth is stirred to battle by a martial ballad: man is borne to his grave to the solemnity of a *marche funèbre*. "Even among the most barbarous and simple Indians," Sidney assures us, "where no writing is, yet have they their poets, who make and sing songs which they call Areytos, both of their ancestors' deeds and the praises of their gods." Wherever there is life, there is art: for life is the impulse for expression, and its ultimate expression is art. But not only have we the crude gods of the Chinese pagoda and the uncouth songs of the aborigines; not only have we this art which is the spontaneous expression of emotional necessity: we have also the paintings of Italy, the sculptures of Greece, and the dramas of Shake-

speare; we have an art in the creation of which necessity has yielded to genius. And yet their nature is the same. One is the confused cry of the heart of men: the other is the ideal voice of one in whose soul the essence of humanity has sublimed itself. One is the cry of the emotions, uttered instinctively for the relief of the utterance: the other is their song, sung for its music alone. But both have their being in and for the emotions. When the minstrel refines the subtleties of his lays forgetful of the feelings of his listeners, his art has become artificial: the Meistersinger has ousted the Minnesinger. And these feelings are common to all men. Wherever there is human nature, there is potential susceptibility to art; for she moves her hearers not in so far as they are kings or scholars or mobs, but in so far as they are men.

Romanticism—and there is much of the Romantic in Castelvetro—turns back from the cities which man made to the woods which are old as the hills. Wordsworth held that the diction of poetry should be a selection of the language of men of humble and rustic life. But Wordsworth only meant that the fundamental human instincts and human passions, with the words which are their visible symbols, are more evident on the native hills of the rustic than in the crowded streets of his more civilised fellow, so that the poet who seeks to express our stark humanity by the throb of vital language finds his best material and his best means in rustic life.

Wordsworth never for a moment meant that the peasant is more susceptible to the humanity of art. For art does not impinge on the feelings like a mountain wind: it is only seen and felt through a medium. Bare nature is blind to this. The eye must be taught to see, the ear to hear, and the mind to understand the old world in the new form to which the limbec of the poet's art has transmuted it. But with this reservation, the most instinctive and most unsophisticated nature is the one that feels the fulness of art. Emotional existence has there its primitive strength: culture alone is necessary to give it width of range. But artistic culture seeks only to open the eyes of the blind: it seeks only to develop natural instincts. It never attempts to add to nature an extraneous accomplishment. For art strikes straight to the native passions: and these are as stunted by the necessities of a sordid existence in the mob as they are smothered by the dust of the bookshelves and the fumes of the midnight oil in a pedant's study.

But pedants had been constituted arbiters of poetry; the curse of a finical intellectuality had descended on art. By referring the ultimate appeal to the mob, Castelvetro removed the bane of scholastic eccentricity: but he substituted that of superficial sensationalism. Again, he has preached to his fellows the error of their ways; and again, his fanaticism has passed beyond the truth. Eclecticism became vulgarity instead of halting at universality.

As poetry is the expression of universal nature, it is capable of universal effect. Let the poet speak to an audience as wide as the ends of the earth. If he limits his appeal, he is not realising the fullest scope of his art: he is preaching the good tidings only to those about Jerusalem and Jordan: and esoteric poetry is the miser's disfigurement of divine charity. Let the poet appeal to no one class of men, neither to the learned nor to the simple. But since by the dispensation of nature or of man there are more of us of the multitude in the world than of the select, let him use his might to touch the better part of us all to finer issues. "The good poet has ever the most enlightened and the best of his time and of his country in his eye, and only what can please them, what can move them, does he deign to write. Even when the dramatist lowers himself to the mob, he does so but to enlighten them and to inform them, never to strengthen them in their prejudices and in the ignoble views of life."[1] This is Lessing. He, like Castelvetro, was primarily a dramatic critic, and the fact that a dramatic audience is necessarily composed of a promiscuous assembly had appealed to him also. His conclusion is nobler

1. *Hamburgische Dramaturgie,* 1. Der gute Schriftsteller hat immer die Erleuchtetsten und Besten seiner Zeit und seines Landes in Augen, und nur was diesen gefallen, was diese rühren kann, würdiget er zu schreiben. Selbst der Dramatiker, wenn er sich zu dem Pöbel herablässt, lässt sich nur darum zu ihm herab, um ihn zu erleuchten und zu bessern, nicht aber ihn in seinen Vorurteilen, ihn in seiner unedeln Denkungsart zu bestärken.

than Castelvetro's: but the way is fraught with danger. It leads him to the 'enlightenment' and the 'improvement' of the mob: and these words are more often given a moral import than an æsthetic one. Indeed, on Lessing himself, the didactic heresy has a strong hold. But his statement of the dramatic appeal, read only in its æsthetic sense, is fundamental. The theatre must provide the public with pleasure: but the true artist gives it only the pleasure of art. He is the light of the world, a lamp neither for the uncultured mob nor for the intellectual coteries. Castelvetro's doctrine of the 'moltitudine rozza' must be rejected from a final system of æsthetics. For its time it was good. Diseases require medicine: but medicine is not the bread of life. "One can show the public no greater respect than by refusing to treat it as a mob."[1] So Goethe said and did. When this spirit animates our dramatists and fills our theatres with appreciative audiences, drama will have come to its own again.

There is another point which is closely associated with Castelvetro's view of the direction of the poetic appeal, and in accord with the logical harmony of his whole theory. He asserts the position firmly that poetry has only pleasure as its function, and going further, he attempts a definition of the pleasure in psychological terms. He finds it, as we have seen, in the 'maraviglia.'

1. *Weimarisches Hoftheater*, 1802. Man kann dem Publikum keine grössere Achtung bezeigen, als indem man es nicht wie Pöbel behandelt.

Tragedy loves the unexpected, the surprising: dramatic critics and dramatic poets are particularly liable to lay stress on the marvellous. The underlying notion would seem to be that fear is intensified by conjunction with the effect of the marvellous: in Castelvetro's words, "la maraviglia è il colmo dello spavento."

"Und was braucht der Dichter uns zu überraschen?" asks Lessing, who by the aid of Diderot seeks to counteract the general tendency. Is, after all, the marvellous the source of a purely æsthetic emotion? It would seem to be legitimate to a certain extent; and especially in Romantic art, where strangeness is added to beauty, where the old is seen in a new light, and where a mighty energy rushes to the surprise of novelty. Moreover, every work of art which offers no single peculiar, and hence new, contribution to our æsthetic sensibility, has no justification for existence. The true faculty of the artist is the power to increase our range of perception, to sharpen our vision to see beauties to which we have hitherto been blind, the light which never was on sea and land: in Coleridge's words, it is the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of the imagination, and in Wordsworth's, the power of throwing over ordinary things a certain colouring of the imagination whereby they should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect. This is little more than what Tasso had said: "by a varied interweaving, making everybody's subject one's

own, and an old one new,"—"variamente tessendola, di commune proprio, e di vecchio nuovo il facevano."

But novelty and originality is not only a feature of Romantic art. The poets and the sculptors of Greece are types to us of fixity, tranquillity, and familiarity: yet if we imply by this more than that Greek art shunned the bizarre, the exaggerated, and the strained, we are falling into error. Their drama took the fables every child had learned to lisp on his nurse's knee. Apollo and Venus were their deities; Orestes, Medea, Prometheus, and Antigone were their biblical characters. But the sculptor takes only the same insignia of the gods, the dramatist only an identity of fabular outline. The rest is his own. The La Milo is like no other Venus: Sophocles' Electra is not the Electra of Euripides. Greek art is the type of familiarity, but not of monotony. If by the pleasure of the marvellous, we mean only the sensible delight in the new and the strange, it must be admitted as universally valid in art. Lamb's old familiar faces are not those we saw around us every day: they look down to us through an ætherial atmosphere of Lamb's tender sentiment, through his childlike regret for the days that are gone: around them clings just that newness which it was Lamb's faculty as poet to give them.

Moreover, art is highest where it most closely realises the ideal, where form is identical with substance. But though art is this sensuous

realisation of the ideal, it is still true that the greatest art seems to hold a promise greater than its fulfilment, by its infinite capacity for suggestion. The fiftieth reading of Hamlet brings new thoughts, new impressions never felt before. This is the true artistic 'marvellous.'

But it is only half the tale. There is also the marvellous which consists in the unexpected and the surprising for the sake of the effect of breathless awe. This as an end in itself can never be æsthetic: for as Kant has taught us, æsthetic pleasure does not consist in a suspension or annihilation of the power of the mind before the inconceivable, but in the judgment where nature and freedom, the sensuous and the intelligible meet, by the image presented to the fancy meeting the needs and accommodating itself to the rules of the understanding. The mighty torrent of Niagara, the gigantic rocks of the Bastei, rising sheer above the Elbe, Lear mad on the heath in the fury of the storm: these seem to annihilate our powers of mind and indeed of feeling by the shock of an astounding impact. They are marvellous to the full. But the shock passes. The mind recovers itself to the sense of the sublime, the feelings realise their fullest distraction, and adapt themselves to the force of the surprise. This 'maraviglia' too, is legitimately artistic: it is the marvellous which is the instrument of tragedy, the culmination of fear. But it is not an end in itself: it is most truly æsthetic when it is passing. Whenever

the chief aim is to 'elevate and surprise'—as the Rehearsal stigmatises the aim of our Heroic drama—there the artist is pandering to the mob. Drama is losing itself in melodrama.

The charm of all great poetry is eternal from generation to generation. It cannot be founded solely on the appalling and the strange, the 'marvellous' in this sense: it can never be founded on the strained and the bizarre, the 'marvellous' in that sense.

"Was glänzt ist für den Augenblick geboren,
Das Echte bleibt der Nachwelt unverloren."

What Castelvetro meant precisely by his 'maraviglia' is not clear. At any rate, the 'verisimile' prevented any wild flights. But any theory which propounds the effect of the marvellous as the primary æsthetic function is false, and has the manifold dangers of all falsity. Its place is in the art of melodrama, not in the art of poetry. The Heroic drama which dazzled almost all Europe in the seventeenth century is its offspring; and under the power of its enchantment, Corneille turned from such masterpieces as the *Cid* and *Horace*, to produce monstrous imbroglios like *Rodogune*.

Castelvetro's conception of the art of poetry needs little criticism. Nobody believes now that the poet is just a man as other men. Despite Castelvetro, the artist has in him some sparks of divine inspiration. Theory may not prove this in syllogism: but experience testifies to it in

fact. Take Lessing: "whatever is at all bearable in my more recent work, I am convinced I owe entirely and alone to criticism." He had just been trying to write tragedy to a preconceived system of rules which his critical faculty had approved. The result is *Miss Sara Sampson*. It lacks alone the creative gift, a gift which Lessing never fully possessed, though with *Emilia Galotti* he begins to show more of a poet's inspiration. And take Dryden: for he also owes what he did in drama to his critical insight. But the real dramatist, as every true artist, needs somewhat of the gustation of the gods. We can dismiss Castelvetro's idea of a poet-producing art of poetry as false and antiquated. If we are to seek in criticism a positive aid to creation, we must find it rather in the maintenance of a current of ideas than in the formulation of a specific technical cyclopædia. We must follow Matthew Arnold rather than Castelvetro. And perhaps we must not follow him too closely.

Of Castelvetro's theory in general, the fundamental fallacy is the insufficiency of the premises from which it is developed. He takes one form of poetic art, namely the drama, and the conditions pertaining to it. His conclusions are thus based on particular limitations. Yet he often gives them universal validity. One example will be sufficient illustration. Drama must be acted on the public stage: therefore it must appeal to a public audience, that is, says Castelvetro, to the mob. But then, with reminiscences

of the ancient bards and gleemen, he proceeds to generalise his conclusion : all poetry must have this specific aim. Such a method can obviously only be logical when the limiting conditions are not peculiar to the form of art under immediate notice, but hold good in all artistic species. For instance, all art is the transference of some form to a substance alien from it by nature. Sculpture gives to marble the form of man : music gives to sound the form of melody : poetry gives to words the form of rhythm : drama gives to actors the form of a life other than their own. Hence the necessity in all art of an æsthetic semblance by means of which the incongruity between the material and the ideal form of the matter is overcome. This is Aristotle's doctrine of verisimilitude. But verisimilitude is absolutely of no account in a consideration of the relation of matter to form : that is a question not of the semblance of truth but of truth itself, not of coincidence but of identity. The only validity of the principle of the 'verisimile' is in the adjustment of the material to the matter in its ideal form.

But in drama the material is of the concrete things of life : drama, as Castelvetro points out, not only imitates words by words, but also things by things. And its ideal form is an image of life. The common term leads to the unwarranted presumption of identity. The identical laws conditioning the things by which the representation is made also condition the things in

their natural form, which are to be represented in an ideal form : and so the representation, that is, the matter in its ideal form, is shackled with the laws which govern the thing represented and the means of representation. Art is to obey the laws of time and space incident to natural life. The stage with its effects, that is, part of the material of the dramatic art, has become coincident with its matter : and both are thus to be in the same sense verisimilar. So verisimilitude produces the unities, but it is a verisimilitude which has ceased to be æsthetic.

Castelvetro's theory of the unities must be rejected. Still in his defence of them he stands above his contemporaries. With him they are part of a theory, namely, that of verisimilitude. And moreover, as we have tried to show, there is a verisimility which is a necessary constituent of æsthetic theory. It is not, however, the verisimility of pure reason, but that of imaginative reason. Even Coleridge's " willing suspension of disbelief " seems to point to a misconception of the really æsthetic verisimilitude : for it implies a process in which pure reason is free to exercise its function according to the criteria of reality. In no other way could ' disbelief ' arise to require a ' willing suspension.' The truer account seems to be that pure reason makes neither positive nor negative decision, having no function in the æsthetic judgment, which is within the scope of the imaginative reason alone.

So far our criticism has been concerned only

with Castelvetro's theory of poetry in general, but its course has brought us to his theory of drama. His claim to a high position in the history of criticism rests on his contribution to the general theory of art. And that holds good despite the fact that his main interest is obviously in drama: indeed this fact alone, namely, that dealing with one species, he arrives at universal truths, is a tribute to his speculative insight. But, as we have seen, his limitation hampered him in many ways. We may go further. Castelvetro's contributions to dramatic theory in particular are generally no more than specious logically, and often, most harmfully false: as for an instance of the former, the notion of verisimilitude, of the latter, the doctrine of the unities. And finally, the greater part of his treatise is occupied with tragedy. But the least satisfactory section of Castelvetro's doctrine, is his theory of tragedy.

Still, even here, there are pearls. He rejects purgation from the sphere of æsthetics. One justification of this is that it tends to set right the error of his contemporaries. The theory of purgation, to all critics up to the time of Lessing, was that of a purely moral and didactic effect of tragedy. Not only that. Lessing expounded the notion of a purgation which was not definitely didactic. But, once accepted in this more justly Aristotelian form, it degenerates even in Lessing's hands to little more than the old heresy. Some characters, he says, are unworthy of imitation in

art: "sie sind unter ihr; denn ihnen fehlet das Unterrichtende." Castelvetro's course removes all danger of this.

But has it not a greater justification, and an ultimate one? Take Aristotle's theory of purgation, understand it in its truth, and is it really æsthetic? Art fulfils its function by the stirring of the emotions. Tragedy arouses a certain pity and fear; and that is, purely as a fine art, as far as it goes. It has ceased to be considered as a fine art, and has become a useful one when its function is the pathological one of purgation. That is the extent of Castelvetro's objection. He does not give Aristotle the lie. He does not deny that tragedy does effect the purgation of the passions. He merely postpones the question as unæsthetic.

One might go further. Is Aristotle's theory true? According to Professor Butcher, it states that tragedy awakens a pity which, through its kinship with fear, is preserved from eccentricity and sentimentalism, and a fear, which through its alliance with pity, is divested of a narrow selfishness: and thus either an excess or a lack of pity or of fear is by an alleviating discharge purged to the limits of the salutary mean. But is this universally valid? Does the process of purgation depend on the possession by the person to be purged, of qualities and instincts which are essential to human nature and universal in it? or does it depend on the possession of qualities which are not universally instinct but

which belong only to a section, if indeed the major section, of human beings? The ideal effect of tragedy is the awakening of a special combination of pity and fear; and in the production of this combination, the purgation is effected. It would seem that only those persons who are of a definite cast of nature or who instinctively and inherently realise a certain moral code, are susceptible to this effect. Aristotle, indeed, does not specifically make the pity and fear arise from a moral consideration: on the contrary he seems to deny such an implication when he says that "the spectacle of a bad man passing from adversity to prosperity *neither* satisfies the moral sense *nor* calls forth pity or fear," and that the "spectacle of the downfall of an utter villain would satisfy the moral sense, *but* would inspire neither pity nor fear." But does not his theory imply the possession by all men of a certain moral sense? "Pity," he says, "is aroused by unmerited misfortune."[1] Does not this imply that the pity on which the purgation depends is itself dependent on a moral judgment? A moral judgment certainly seems requisite, otherwise how is the misfortune merited or unmerited? Then a subsequent question arises, and a crucial one. If the moral judgment is necessary, is it a spontaneous instinctive one, exactly coincident with the æsthetic judgment; or is it a conscious one antecedent to the æsthetic judgment? In the former case, then the faculty which forms

1. *Poetics*, xiii, 2. (Butcher.)

this specific moral judgment must be universal, if the purgation is to be accepted as a true theory. The latter case is open to more obvious objections. It is not one in which an already conscious æsthetic impression is referred to a judgment valid only in the case of reality, as is the moral judgment: that, as a consequent process, is legitimate and may strengthen or weaken the previous impression. But it is a case in which the moral judgment would be primary and antecedent to the sensibility to the artistic impression. And if this is true of Aristotle's theory of purgation, then the pity and the fear it involves are not æsthetic emotions.

Further, consider Aristotle's theory not from the point of view of its æsthetic validity, but from the point of view of its relation to experience. "Fear is aroused by the misfortune of a man like ourselves."[1] Hence, the tragic emotions are only aroused by a definite reference of the condition of the hero to that of ourselves. Is that what we actually do when we see Hamlet on the stage? On the contrary, is it not only the pure reason which is conscious of the distinctions of self? The imaginative reason is free from this limitation. It partakes of the breadth of universal life, and its vision is the eternal scheme of things. That is why poetry is a higher and a more philosophic thing than history.

1. *Poetics*, xiii, 2. (Butcher.)

Aristotle's theory of purgation, then, would seem to have something dubious in it. But, like Castelvetro on another occasion, "io non sono ben certo." After all, it is Aristotle's. This, however, does seem clear. Whether the purgation is true in fact or not, it is certainly unæsthetic. It leads the artist conscious of it, away from his true function; and it is more often misunderstood than understood; in the history of criticism it has been the warrant of a conscious didacticism and a moral purpose more often than the recognition of a pathological or psychological process. Castelvetro brought not the slightest danger to art by rejecting it from his theory of poetry.

Aristotle wrote that there may be tragedy without character. Like Castelvetro, we do not hold that opinion nowadays. Students of Greek art and philosophy have made frequent attempts to seek some harmony between Aristotle's dictum and modern feeling. But their general conclusion is that Aristotle did not look primarily for character in tragedy: action was the thing, with character coming in only in its train. Yet it seems almost inexplicable to us, as it did to Castelvetro, that with *Œdipus* before him, Aristotle could conceive of tragedy without character. The question is so extremely involved and has ever been such a riddle to our best Greek scholars, that even the most remote pretence at an attempt to solve it would be gross impertinence in us: but as one or two thoughts on the

matter have been suggested by Castelvetro, we venture to give them for what they are worth.

In that part of Mr. Bosanquet's *History of Æsthetic* which deals with Winckelmann, there is the following remark on the grand style. "It is the principle of the grand style to express no sensibility: but there is not in human nature any state free from sensibility or passion, and beauty without expression would be without significance. In fact, then, the grand style is 'the expression of a significant and eloquent silence of the soul,' and is, as Plato said, the most difficult form of expression possible. Thus the absence of expression and the highest form of expression are identified."[1] The characters of Greek tragedy are heroic in the grand style, such as Castelvetro would have them in all tragedy—hanno gli spiriti maggiori, e sono altiere. They are embodiments of one mighty passion—vogliono troppo quello che vogliono—love to a brother in Antigone, hatred to tyranny in Prometheus. They are pledged by an innate greatness of soul to one great issue: their whole being is at the one hazard, to stand or fall by their own immutable will—non ricorrono a' magistrati a querelarsi dello'ngiuriante, ma si fanno da se ragione secondo che l'appetito loro detta. Œdipus, indeed, is not so obviously a type of one ruling thought and one supreme emotion: but with a greater subtlety of characterisation, he also, in the *Œdipus Rex*, is just the

1. Bosanquet, *History of Æsthetic*, p. 247.

Nemesis of crime, and in the *Œdipus at Coloneus*, its purification by fire. And this favourite subject of Greek drama fixes the badge of suffering on its heroes: it puts them in that position where the vast soul is stilled to silence. There are few of the intricacies of a manifold emotional existence, few of the subtleties and peculiarities which mark off the individual from the species.

> Schwer zu unterscheiden,
> Noch schwerer zu ergründen sind die Menschen,

says Schiller. Romantic art seeks the hidden traits, lays bare the obscurest thought, seizes the emotion passing like the lightning even as it is discerned. And yet, in a master's hand, not only does it so portray man divided from man in his individuality: it achieves the more difficult task of establishing his character on the foundations of human nature. The former function the Greeks scarcely attempted: their characters are men in their typical nature, the embodiment of the universal moral substance: they are seen, not in their individual differences, but in their fundamental being. They have no affectations, no humours, no peculiarities. And how far do we now associate character with these marks of purely individual existence?

Similar words represent such different ideas as the ages pass that it is difficult to be sure that in comparing the value of ideas represented by corresponding words, we are in reality compar-

ing the corresponding ideas. Do ἤθος, costumi, character, represent corresponding ideas? The critics of the Renaissance use many words as a translation of ἤθος, some of them apparently of no fixed connotation—"costumi," "affetti." These terms suggest 'affectations,' 'manners': they seem much nearer to Jonson's 'humours' than to Aristotle's ἤθος. In one place indeed, Castelvetro uses 'costumi' definitely for 'manners.' In another, he divides the 'costumi' into two divisions, 'external' and 'internal,' "forestieri" and "interni." It is apparent how little of the former has any being in what we call character. Further, Castelvetro defines the 'costumi interni' as a "manifestation of one's likes and dislikes," "una dichiarazione di quello che altri appetisce o rifiuta": this, however, is but a translation of Aristotle's incidental definition.

It would seem, then, that the critics of the Renaissance failed to realise critically the Greek conception of character. Castelvetro is nearest to it unconsciously when he is formulating his requirements for the hero of tragedies constructed according to his own theories: but he does not seem to approach its essence directly: for Aristotle appears to have confused the issue by some of his remarks and by the use of one or two words in a somewhat esoteric sense. One wonders if Aristotle's apparent neglect of character in drama can be at all accounted for by the fact that the dramatic heroes of the Greeks are, like Winckelmann's grand style, the "expression of a

significant and eloquent silence of the soul." Character these heroes have to the full, but little characteristic. In the grand style, the absence of expression and the highest form of expressiveness are identified: so in the grand style of character in tragedy, the absence of characteristic, and the highest form of character are identified.

This must not be taken to mean that the heroes of Greek drama, and of all great drama, accept the whips and scorns of fortune with fatalistic calmness and resignation. On the contrary, they are a mighty force of action: non comportano la'ngiuria patientemente. Antigone buries her brother: Œdipus works out his own salvation, after wreaking vengeance on himself. In a limited sense of the word 'action,' *Hamlet*, and in some measure, *Œdipus at Coloneus* may be called tragedies of inaction, in so far as there are in them very few external acts. But theirs is not the inaction which is a lack of spiritual and mental reaction to external conditions: for that inaction is essentially undramatic. It may be highly poetic, as in Synge's *Riders to the Sea*: but it is not tragic, not, indeed, dramatic. One doubts if the spirit of the Irish movement is congenial to tragedy at all. It has given us beautiful 'woeful, wild, old' tales, like *Deirdre*. But in this most tragic of all its plays there is too much of the feeling that "thus it was written"; the ceaseless burden of its chorus is the inevitability of the decrees of fate. But drama at least must show us the growth or

manifestation of character under the stress of action. It is best of all when its action is rooted in the character of its heroes, and not a separate growth impinging its weight on them. Only Othello could so have fallen to Iago, and only Iago could have contrived such devilish stumbling blocks.

Tragic action should have its seeds in the character of the tragic hero. This, perhaps, points to the failing of Schiller's *Maria Stuart.* The plot is most excellently contrived: incident follows incident in a complication where all falls pat at the proper moment. But the probability and necessity of the plot has no compulsion from the character of the two Queens. The dénouement is given us as a necessity of political diplomacy. The hazard is an abstract welfare of England. But there is little of human destiny in it, little of human character initiating a one and an inevitable line of action. Hence there is little of the feeling of tragedy. Schiller has indeed an almost unique capacity of identifying an individual with a general spirit: Wilhelm Tell is the incarnation of the spirit of Switzerland striving for liberty, and so he is an heroic figure noble as the spirit he embodies. But Maria Stuart is so frequently but the embodiment merely of an abstract policy of diplomacy: neither as an individual nor as a symbol of a movement has she the power and the nobility which is tragic. If our analysis of the drama is correct, *Maria Stuart* is an instance which would

make it appear that Aristotle was somewhat precipitate in allowing for drama without character. At least, it would have been interesting if he had given us examples. Castelvetro is only anticipating the course of the history of æsthetic by rejecting Aristotle's view.

But beyond this there is little of the first importance in Castelvetro's theory of tragedy; simply because, as we have said, he treats not of ideal tragedy but of the tragic in general. He has no specific mention of the conflict which is the soul of tragedy: he has no lucid and complete exposition of the tragic hero.

Aristotle had perhaps too narrowly limited the range within which tragedy may seek its hero; and Castelvetro, by his inclusion of the saint amongst the possible heroes, may be said in some measure to be widening this range. But such a widening is only to be truly effected by a suspension of all considerations of moral questions of guilt and innocence. The saint is not tragic—if he is so—because he is guiltless. He is tragic only in so far as he inevitably involves mighty powers mortally opposed. But saints on the stage are so apt to be bloodless. Moreover, the Christian religion with its insistence on divine mercy, on the Atonement, and on the saint's everlasting rest, is not favourable for nourishing the idea of tragedy: "whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, shall save it"; and with this belief in our heart

of hearts, where is the victory of the grave, where the sting of death? The brave sublunary things have no appeal. As in Corneille's *Polyeucte*, death is not a tragic destruction, but a happy release. Posa, the most beautiful character in Schiller, and the most saintly, is not tragic at all so long as he is ardently renouncing life and exulting in self-sacrifice: all this is intensely poetic and soul-stirring, but it is not tragic, until at the very end, he rushes from the Queen with the heart-felt note of conflict—"O Gott, das Leben ist doch schön." All attempts to write a purely Christian tragedy have failed. Only perhaps the severer side of Christianity, a strict Puritanism with its tinge of Judaism could nourish tragedy: for the Hebraistic doctrine of the descent of sin to the third and fourth generation has much in common with that notion of the Nemesis of crime which permeates the dramas of Æschylus and many of those of Sophocles.

So Castelvetro's admission of the saint amongst the tragic heroes is of little worth: and moreover, he defends this admission, as later he bars out the villain, on totally unsatisfactory grounds, namely, entirely on a moral consideration of the doctrine of guilt and innocence.

He is much nearer the truth in his remark that the tragic hero shall be heroic, and so comprehend within himself powers capable of the utmost discord. The solution of his fate must be ultimate, and not merely a human adjustment of awards as in law-court procedure. "The tragic

hero does not run to the magistrate with his complaints, but is a law to himself, at the dictate of his own will." By this Castelvetro seems to imply that the tragic hero's condition must be truly desperate: that his conflicts must be above the might of man to settle harmoniously: that to his desperation there is but one end, an unnatural death, and not for him alone, but for his enemies and for his friends—"uccedono per vendetta i lontani ei congiunti di sangue, e per disperatione non pure i congiunti di sangue, ma talhora anchora sestessi." This seems in truth to express the idea of our greatest tragedies. The conflict of Hamlet's dual nature is incapable of present healing; his antagonism to his uncle is above a merely human tribunal: and so his state is truly desperate, and his tragedy drags not only him to death, but Polonius, Ophelia and his other more definite antagonists. On the other hand, the tragedy of *Adam Bede* is ruined by the continuation of the story beyond the trial and condemnation of Hetty Sorrell: for we feel that if the fates of its persons can be so adjusted and mitigated by human agency, then they have not the necessary inevitability of tragedy. From this particular point of view, the tragic effect is much more fully realised by Mr. Hardy in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, a tale which is very similar to that of *Adam Bede*. But yet Mr. Hardy misses the ideally tragic. He shows us character broken on the wheel of fate's action, rather than character broken by action of its own initiation:

for unfortunately, Mr. Hardy has a creed to expound, and more unfortunately for tragedy, that creed is the most pessimistic determinism. So compared with Meredith, he stands as Webster to Shakespeare, as the terrible to the tragic.

But to return to Castelvetro. We have seen how by his conception of the heroic nature of the tragic hero, he manifests some realisation of the idea of tragedy. But his theory is not fully developed. He justly asserts that the hero's fate must be desperate, and must have an ultimate compulsion. Unfortunately he does not so far elaborate his notion as to specify in what this ultimate compulsion consists. But he does indicate that it is to be found in the individual himself, in his nature and his will—"secondo che l'appetito loro detta." And in this he is unconsciously linking up the idea of Greek tragedy to that of Shakespeare's and the Romantics'.

The heroes of Greek tragedy are embodiments of the eternal moral substance: its tragic situation is the excessive assertion of the claims of one part, justifiable in itself, of this substance: and its tragic fact is the destruction of such relative innocence necessary to the maintenance of the unity of the substance. The interest is transcendent, fixed on the eternal ethical being, the Godlike (*Göttliche*), as Hegel calls it. "Not however the Godlike as an abstraction, but as the actual substance, the real permeating force, the

eternal powers, the gods of living reality, in short the divine and the true, not at all in its reposeful healing might, as gods sunk like sculptures in their own blessedness, but the Godlike amongst its disciples and adherents, as substance and end of human individuality, as the concrete presence brought to existence, incited to action and stirred to motion."

As the heroes of Greek tragedy stand forth in their whole being adherents and partakers of this divine essence, they are of heroic form: there is behind them the weight of eternal, infinite verities. Moreover, as the tragedy is involved in a reassertion of the unity of this ethical substance, guilt and innocence are primary questions. Œdipus is pursued by the Nemesis of crime, Orestes by its remorse.

But in modern tragedy, the ultimate compulsion, the Godlike, is more immanent than transcendent. The centre of interest is individuality. The tragic situation to the Greeks was the conflict of the moral substance divided against itself: the tragic situation to Shakespeare is the individual spirit divided against itself. The instincts and the passions of human nature in its totality in the individual have the tragic claim and the tragic validity in Shakespearian drama, which in Greek drama, only direct relation of the conflicting elements to the eternal ethical substance could have had. So we suspend, as it were, the moral judgment; and so we widen the tragic scope. The Greeks have no tragedy

in which the hero is absolutely criminal: Œdipus commits a crime, but unknowingly; Antigone's sin and that of Orestes, are only relatively so. But Macbeth is absolutely a criminal, still more so is Richard. Yet all these characters have one thing in common, a majestic greatness of soul: a greatness in the one case involved in the conflict of the moral essence of life, in the other, involved in the conflict of the soul itself. The solution is the reassertion of the the unity, either, in the tragedies of the Greeks, of the moral substance itself, or, in the tragedies of the moderns, of universal human nature. The former is possible without death: the usurping element need only be restrained by the withdrawal of the excessive claims of one part of the ethical substance. Œdipus destroys his eyes, but he is purged and lives. But in modern tragedy the deathless end is impossible. The conflict is entirely within the individual: its solution can only be determined in the individual and not by the intercession of Athene or of any other divine guardian of the ethical powers: no element of the conflict can be withdrawn, for each has the same inevitability in its existence in human nature. Hamlet's life, with Hamlet's nature, is impossible. Macbeth can no more lay aside his ambition than his greatness: so he must die. Character is truly destiny.

In this matter, again, Castelvetro advances from Aristotle along the line of modern thought; but in this case haltingly and but half con-

sciously. He realised the idea of tragedy only imperfectly: his tragic hero has some of the really essential qualities amongst others either accidental or indeed quite alien. And when he does attempt a fuller view of the tragic scope it is to include the unsatisfactory instance of the tragedy of innocence overwhelmed by suffering. Yet he has more than intermittent perceptions of the tragic situation and of the tragic fact: and these are of the essence of the idea of tragedy.

But we make no claim that Castelvetro is a Hegel, a Kant, or an Aristotle. We have endeavoured to show that he has a firmer hold on æsthetic truth than have his immediate forerunners; that as a theorist of poetry, he is above Tasso, as a theorist of æsthetics, at least his equal; that as an expositor of the idea of drama and particularly of tragedy he is unique in a long period of time when the epic dominated critical attention; and that above all he is the man of his age "from whom," in Rapin's words, "most may be learnt." He stands for openness of mind, and a disposition to enquire into the root of the matter, for an insight which pierces to the radical error. His method and genius lead him to such fundamental truths as the assertion of the true function of art, the originality of the artist, and the rejection of conventional trickery: and all this in the sixteenth century. On the other hand, he is responsible for the ushering of the unities into dramatic criticism, and for the theory of the difficulty overcome.

Unfortunately, these were the parts of his doctrine which had the most apparent and immediate influence on his successors. But take him for all in all, he is the most illuminating critic of the art of poetry between Longinus and Dryden; one, with whom to err, is a liberal critical education.

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